



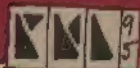
1995
ANNUAL

8 \$3.95 US
\$5.50 CAN
£2.50 UK

YEAR ONE

DETECTIVE COMICS
FEATURING

BATMAN



PCR

CHUCK DIXON ▼ KIERON DWYER



DIRECT SALES

QUESTIONS.

QUESTIONS.

QUESTIONS!

I'M SICK
OF ALL YOUR
QUESTIONS!

PRYING.

NEEDLING.

INSINUATING.

SO OBVIOUS
AND TACTLESS.

QUIT THE
SENSELESS
QUIZZING!

I WILL EXPLAIN
IN FULL WHAT YOU, IN
THE DEPTHS OF YOUR
IGNORANCE, STRUGGLE
TO WHEELDE FROM
ME.

THE PATHOS.
THE VIOLENCE.
THE GENIUS.

THIS IS AN
EPIC OF
LARCENY AND
MURDER. LET
ME TELL
YOU...

ONCE
UPON A
CRIME...

QUESTIONS MULTIPLY THE MYSTERY

"I'LL SHARE WITH YOU MY
HEADIEST TRIUMPHS AND
LOWEST DEFEATS.

"LIKE THE STRADNARIUS
KIDNAPPING.

"WHAT A SWEET SCORE
THAT WAS GOING TO BE.

"DAMN THE
BATMAN.

CHUCK DIXON - WRITER
KIERON DWYER - ARTIST
RICHMOND LEWIS - COLORIST
ALBERT DE GUZMAN - LETTERER
DARREN VINCENZO - ASSOC. EDITOR
SCOTT PETERSON - EDITOR

BATMAN Created by
BOB KANE





THIS IS THE
STORY OF EDWARD
NIGMA!

IT'S MY
STORY!

"IT ALL BEGAN ON THE
TREE-SHADED STREETS OF
WATERBURY."

WHY ARE
LEAVES
GREEN?

BECAUSE.

BECAUSE
WHY?

WHY ARE
LEAVES GREEN,
DAD?

HOW THE
HELL SHOULD
I KNOW?

GO BUG
SOMEBODY
ELSE. I'M
BUSY!

ASK YOUR
FATHER!



I DUNNO.
CHLOROPHYLL
OR SUMPIN'.

WHUZZAT?

LOOK, YOU
GONNA CROSS
THE STREET,
OR WHAT?

"ADULTS DIDN'T
HAVE THE ANSWERS.
OR MAYBE THEY
FORGOT THEM."

"I WAS
DETERMINED
TO BE A GUY
WITH ALL THE
ANSWERS..."



"...EVEN IF I HAD
TO MAKE UP THE
QUESTIONS.

CHILDREN. A
VERY SPECIAL
ASSIGNMENT
FOR YOU.

A PUZZLE.

"MRS. NORDINE
WAS MY SIXTH
GRADE TEACHER.

IT'S A
GAME. A
PUZZLE.

BUT IT'S
ALSO A
TEST.

TOMORROW YOU'LL
EACH BE TAKEN IN TURN
TO THE TEACHERS'
LOUNGE.

A GENTLEMAN
WILL BE THERE TO
MONITOR YOU. HE
WANTS TO SEE HOW
QUICKLY YOU CAN
PUT THIS PUZZLE
TOGETHER.

THE STUDENT TO PUT
THE PUZZLE TOGETHER
IN THE FASTEST TIME
WILL BE HONORED
AT NEXT WEEK'S
ASSEMBLY.

AND
NOT ONLY
THAT...

"THE WINNER
WILL RECEIVE A
PRIZE.



WHAT'S IT A PUZZLE OF?

THAT WOULD BE CHEATING... UM... FREDDIE.



MY NAME'S EDDIE.

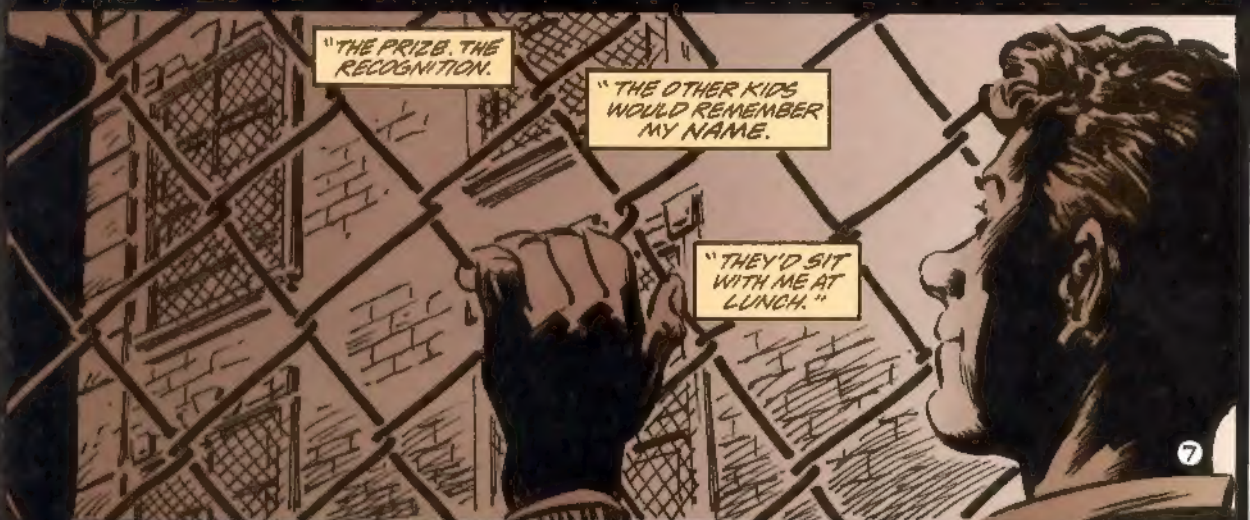
BIG FAT COW.



"STORY OF MY LIFE, YOU KNOW.

"I WAS A CYPHER. A NOBODY BENEATH THE NOTICE OF EVEN THE SCHOOL BULLIES.

"BUT I COULD SOLVE THAT PUZZLE.



"THE PRIZE, THE RECOGNITION.

"THE OTHER KIDS WOULD REMEMBER MY NAME.

"THEY'D SIT WITH ME AT LUNCH."



BUT WHAT CHANCE DID I HAVE?

A MEDIOCRE STUDENT. A FACELESS KID, AS FORGETTABLE AS THE CAPITAL OF IDAHO.



TELL YOU A SECRET...



I'M AN ONLY CHILD.

LOTS OF TIMES I'D HEAR MY PARENTS FIGHTING. ONE NIGHT I CRAWLED OUT OF BED AND LISTENED.

THEY WERE BLAMING EACH OTHER FOR SOMETHING.

REALLY GOING AT IT. DISHES AND PANS FLYING.



KNOW WHAT?

THEY WERE BLAMING EACH OTHER FOR ME.

"THERE WAS ONLY
ONE WAY I COULD
BEAT THE OTHERS.

"AND IT WAS THEN
THAT I FOUND MY
TRUE CALLING IN
LIFE...



"CHEATING.

"I PUT THE PUZZLE
TOGETHER AFTER
THIRTY MINUTES.



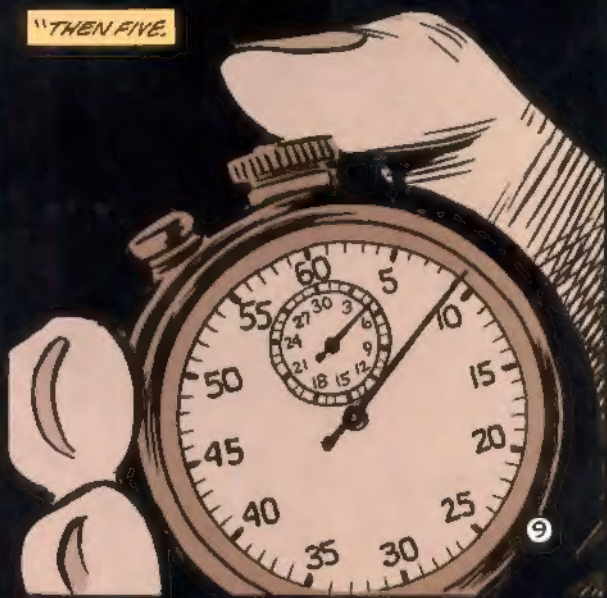
"AND THEN
FIFTEEN.



"THEN TEN.



"THEN FIVE.



"I ASSEMBLED THE
PUZZLE SIX TIMES
IN A ROW IN UNDER
ONE MINUTE.

"I THOUGHT THAT
WOULD EASILY
EARN ME THE PRIZE.

"AND SO IT DID."

BUT ALL
GLORY IS
FLEETING

A WEEK
LATER I WAS
A NOBODY
AGAIN.

"EVERYTHING
WAS THE SAME
AS IT WAS.

"EXCEPT THAT
THE BULLIES
NOW NOTICED
ME.



"BULLIES LIKE
THE BATMAN."



"ALL MY SCHEMING AND
CHICANERY ONLY SERVE
TO BRING CALAMITY
TO ME!"



"THE BATMAN."

"WHY AM I TALKING
ABOUT HIM?"



MY STORY

MY STORY.

MY STORY.

MINE!

RUN, RUN, RUN.

ALL I DO IS RUN.



I'M TIRED OF IT. REALLY I AM.

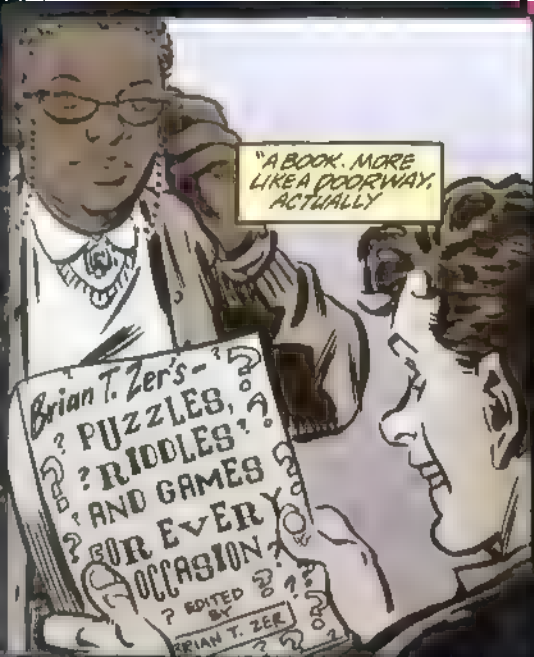
NOW... WHERE WAS I?

THE CONTEST, RIGHT? THE STUPID PUZZLE

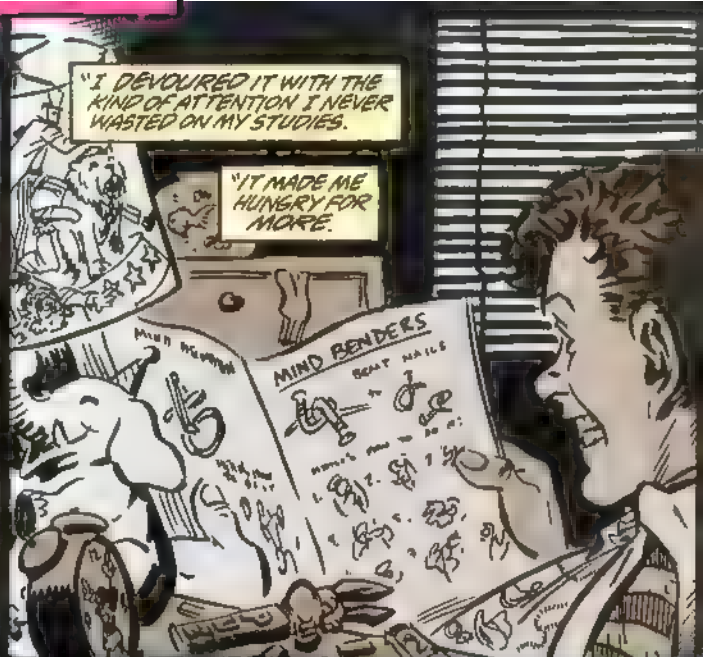


YES, MY EVENTLESS CHILDHOOD WAS OVER, THOUGH NOTHING OUTWARD HAD CHANGED...

...I HAD WON THE PRIZE.



"A BOOK, MORE LIKE A DOORWAY, ACTUALLY."



"I DEVoured IT WITH THE KIND OF ATTENTION I NEVER WASTED ON MY STUDIES."

"IT MADE ME HUNGRY FOR MORE."



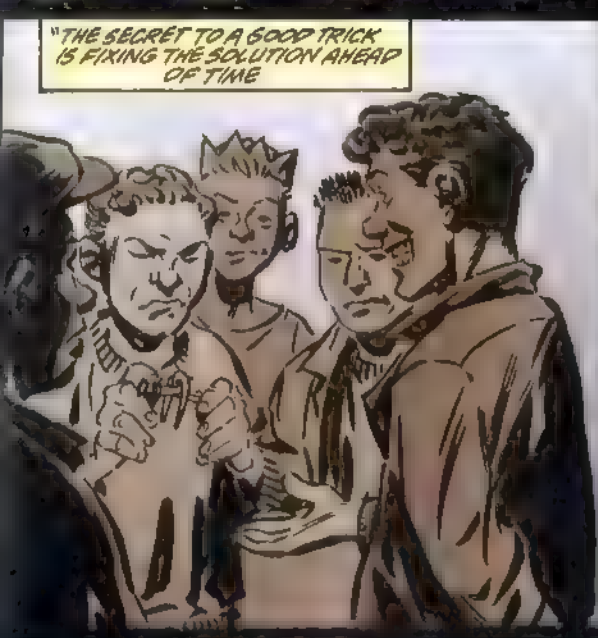
"I HAD TO KNOW EVERYTHING THERE WAS TO KNOW ABOUT PUZZLES AND TRAPS AND TRICKERY."

"MY FAVORITE SUBJECT WAS THE GREAT HOUDINI."



"OLD HARRY AND I SHARE A TALENT."

"WE BOTH CHEAT."



"THE SECRET TO A GOOD TRICK IS FIXING THE SOLUTION AHEAD OF TIME"



"SKILL AT SLEIGHT-OF-HAND IS IMPORTANT AS WELL..."

[illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible]

"...A SKILL THAT COMES WITH TIME."

"NONONONONONONONONONO!"

"NO."

"HE WASN'T THERE!

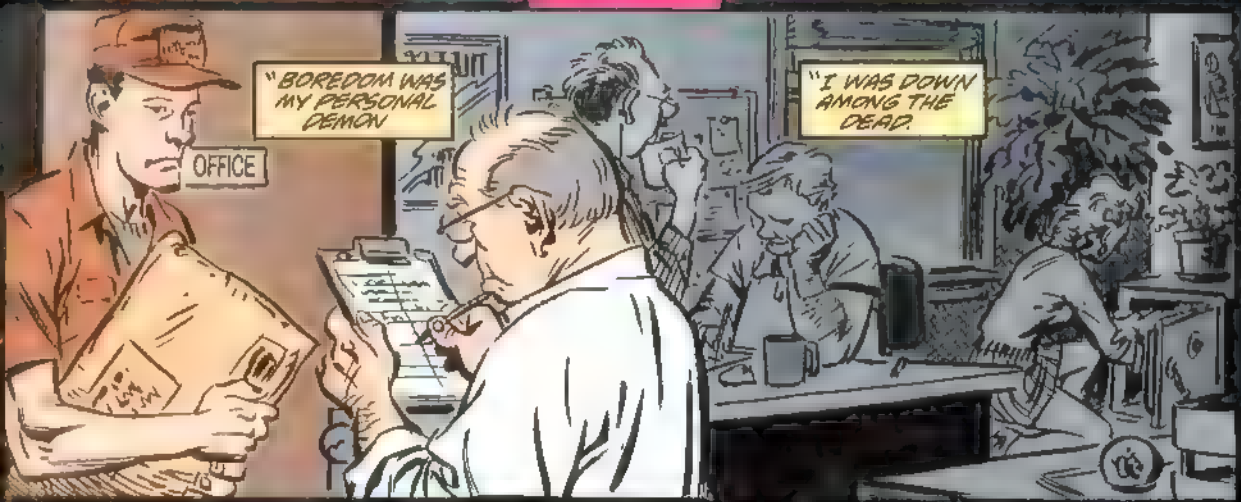
HE CAME LATER... AFTER I LEFT SCHOOL..."

"...AFTER I JOINED THE WORK-A-DAY WORLD
"A PRODUCTIVE MEMBER OF SOCIETY, EDWARD NIGMA, WORKING STIFF."

Speedy DELIVERY

"I WAS IN HELL."

14



"BOREDOM WAS
MY PERSONAL
DEMON

OFFICE

"I WAS DOWN
AMONG THE
DEAD.



"BUT JUST AS THE EARTH
WAS ABOUT TO CLOSE
ON ME...

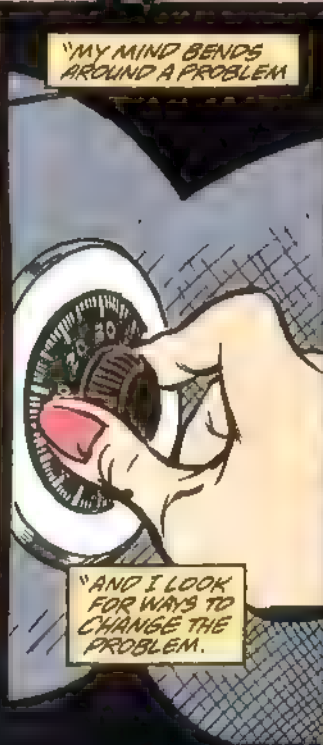


"...THE GATES OF
HEAVEN YAWNED
WIDE.



"I RELIED ON MY GIFT
FOR THE CHEAT.

"I HAVE NO
REAL SKILL
BUT THE FIX.

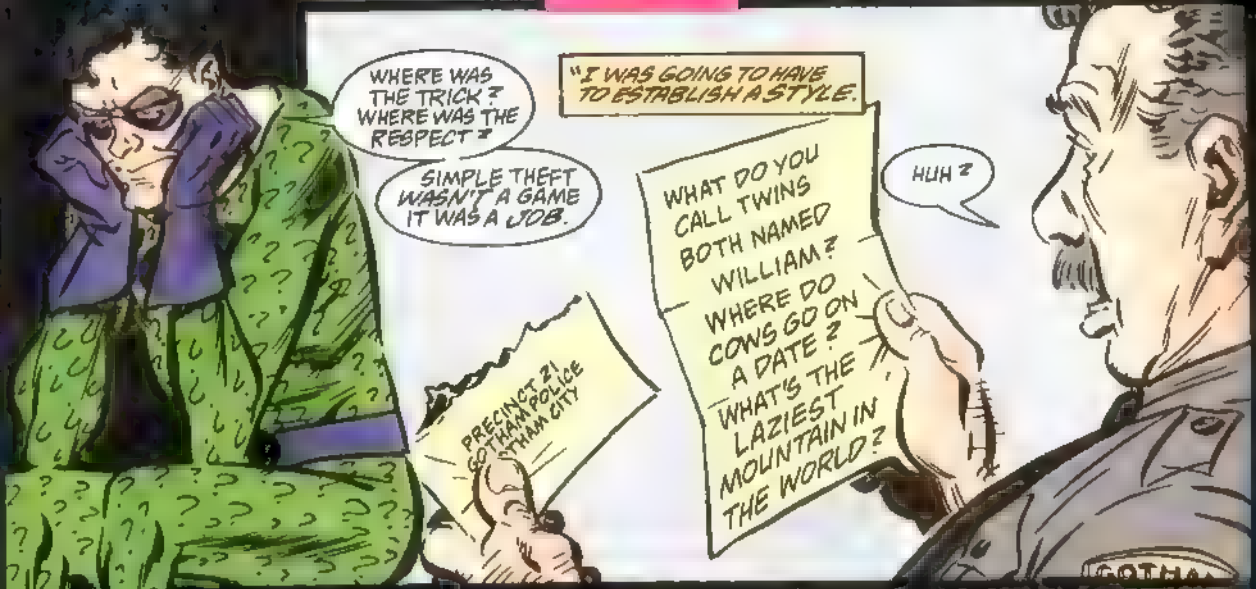


"MY MIND BENDS
AROUND A PROBLEM

"AND I LOOK
FOR WAYS TO
CHANGE THE
PROBLEM.



"BUT THERE
WAS NO
THRILL TO
THIS."



WHERE WAS THE TRICK?
WHERE WAS THE RESPECT?

"I WAS GOING TO HAVE
TO ESTABLISH A STYLE."

SIMPLE THEFT
WASN'T A GAME
IT WAS A JOB.

PRECINCT 21
GOTHAM POLICE
THAN CITY

WHAT DO YOU
CALL TWINS
BOTH NAMED
WILLIAM?
WHERE DO
COWS GO ON
A DATE?
WHAT'S THE
LAZIEST
MOUNTAIN IN
THE WORLD?

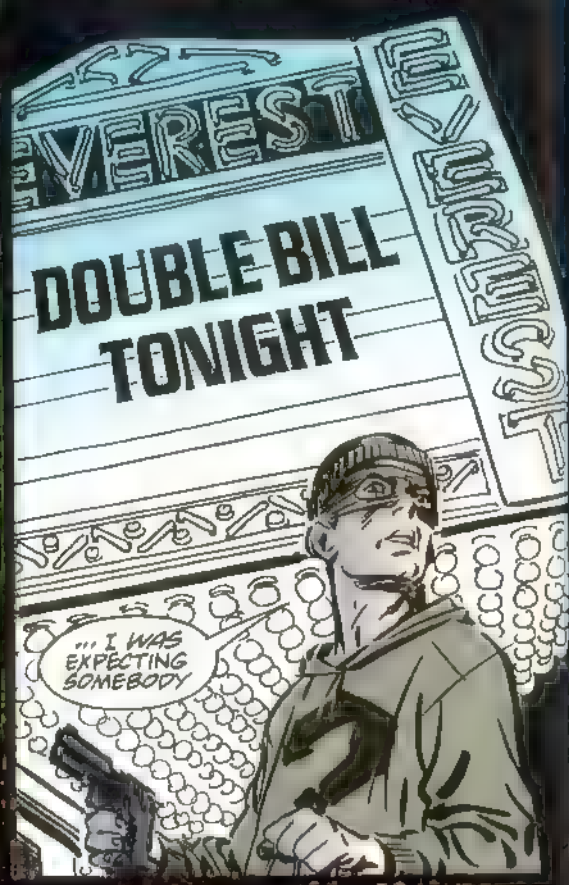
HUH?



"AT FIRST MY CLEVERNESS
WASN'T APPRECIATED."

WHAT ARE YOU
WAITIN' FOR?
HERE'S THE CASH,
YA NUT!

ACTUALLY...



... I WAS
EXPECTING
SOMEBODY

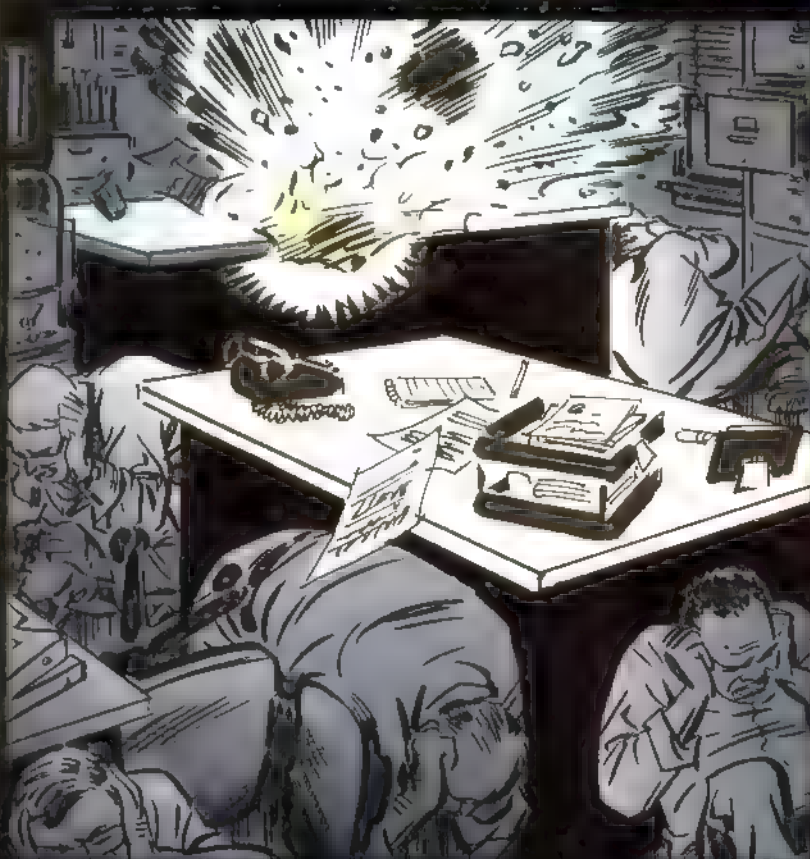
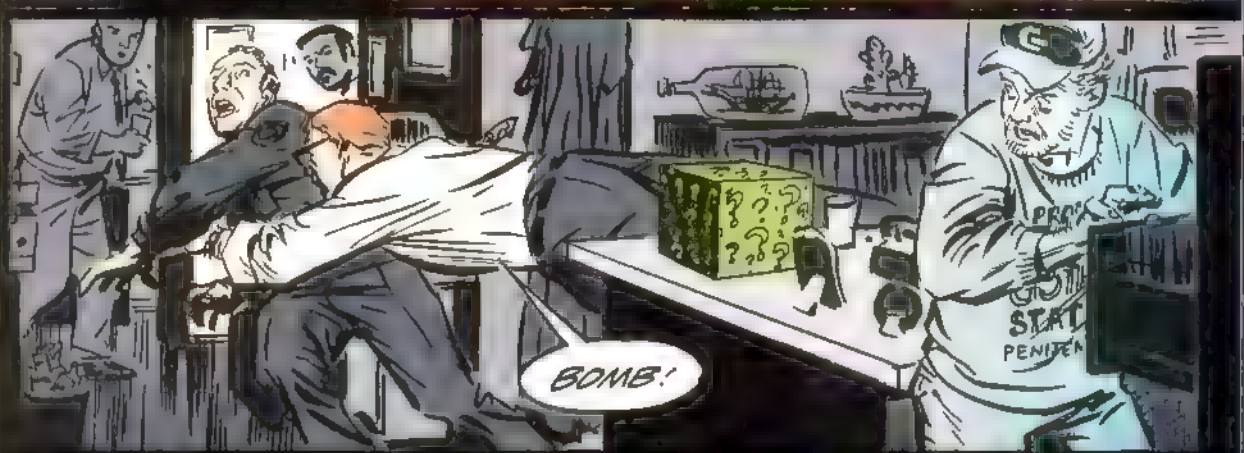


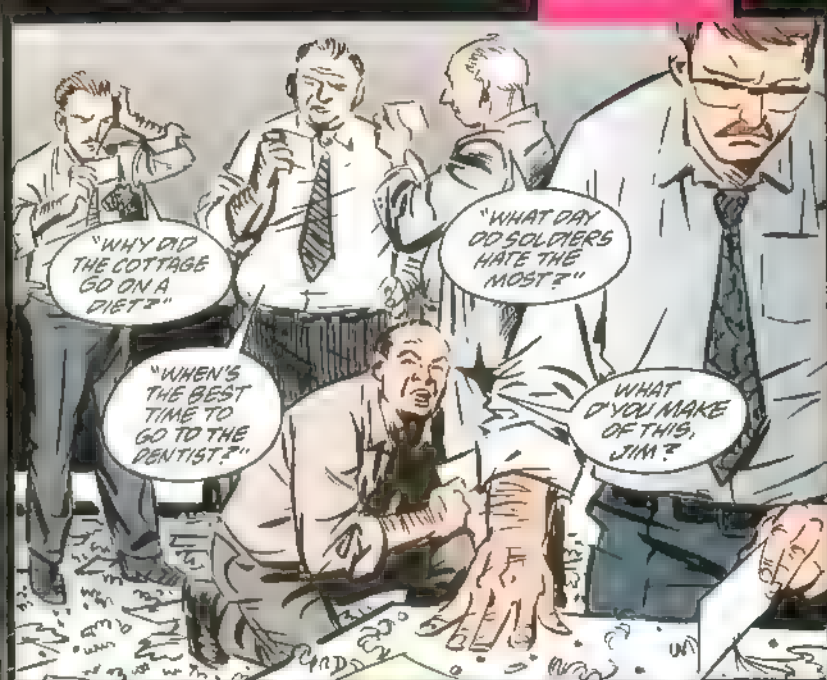
"I HAD TO WORK
HARDER FOR THEIR
ATTENTION."

YO, LIEUTENANT. I
THINK THIS PACKAGE
IS FOR YOU.

ROBBERY
DIVISION

YOU THINK?





"WHY DID THE COTTAGE GO ON A DIET?"

"WHEN'S THE BEST TIME TO GO TO THE DENTIST?"

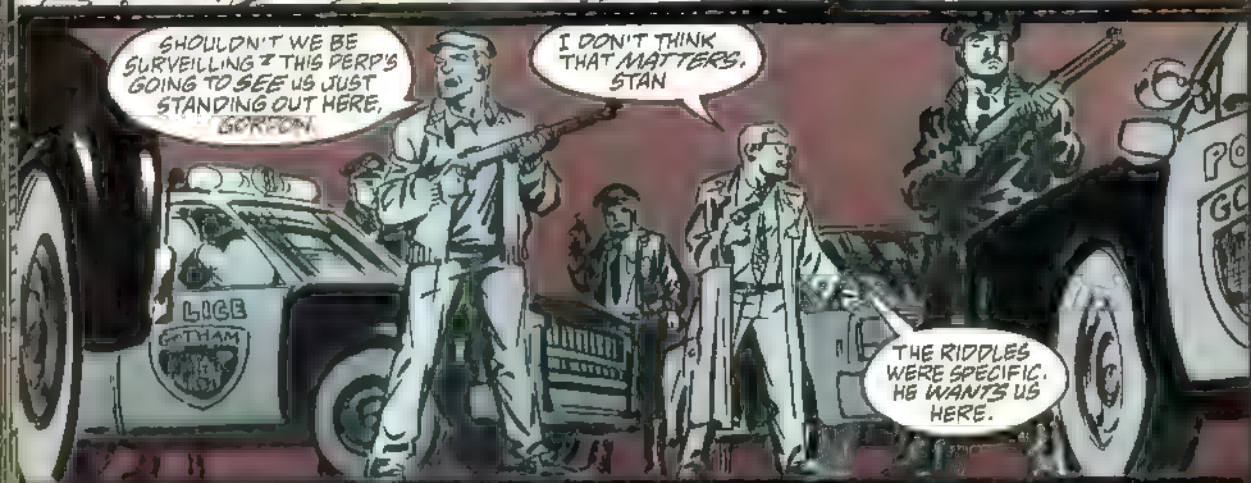
"WHAT DAY DO SOLDIERS HATE THE MOST?"

"WHAT DO YOU MAKE OF THIS, JIM?"



TROUBLE.

The Riddler



SHOULDN'T WE BE SURVEILLING THIS PERP'S GOING TO SEE US JUST STANDING OUT HERE, GORDON.

I DON'T THINK THAT MATTERS, STAN.

THE RIDDLES WERE SPECIFIC. HE WANTS US HERE.



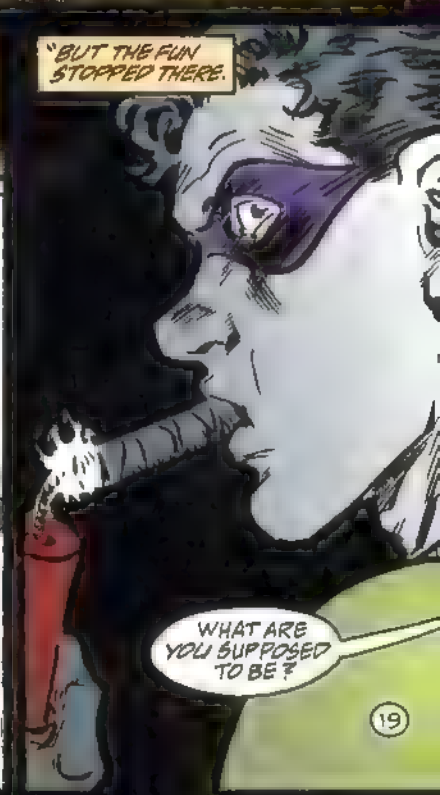
THE LIGHTHOUSE CLUB ON MARCH FOURTH.

AND IT'S A MINUTE TO TWO THIRTY



YOU HEAR THAT?

A HISSING SOUND...



"I'D READ ABOUT HIM
IN THE TABLOIDS."

"I THOUGHT HE WAS
JUST AN URBAN
LEGEND. A DYSTOPIC
FOLKTALE."

"LIKE ALBINO ALLIGATORS
IN THE SEWERS, OR THE
CHOKING DOBERMAN."

I'M THE
RIDDLER!

HUH?

WHAT ARE
YOU DRESSED
AS? THE
QUESTION
MARK? THE
QUIZMASTER?

"BUT HE WAS
REAL. ALL
RIGHT."

OOF!

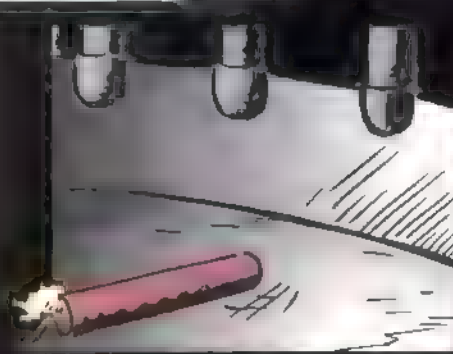


"RIGHT FROM THE FIRST HE
KNEW HOW TO HUMILIATE
ME; GALL ME.



THE RIDDLER, HM? I'VE
HAD IT WITH YOU "THEME"
VILLAINS.

UNNH!



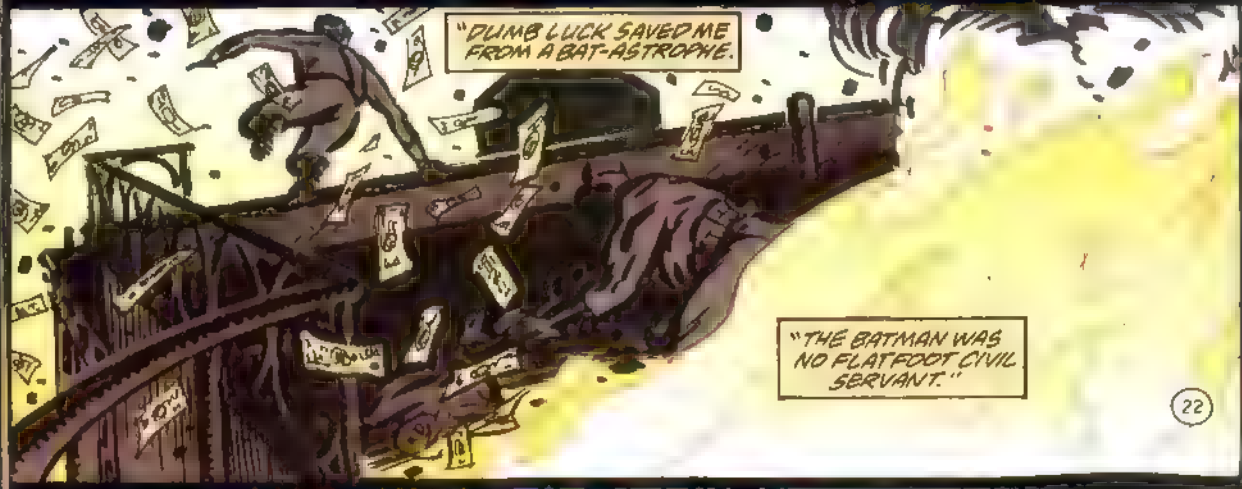
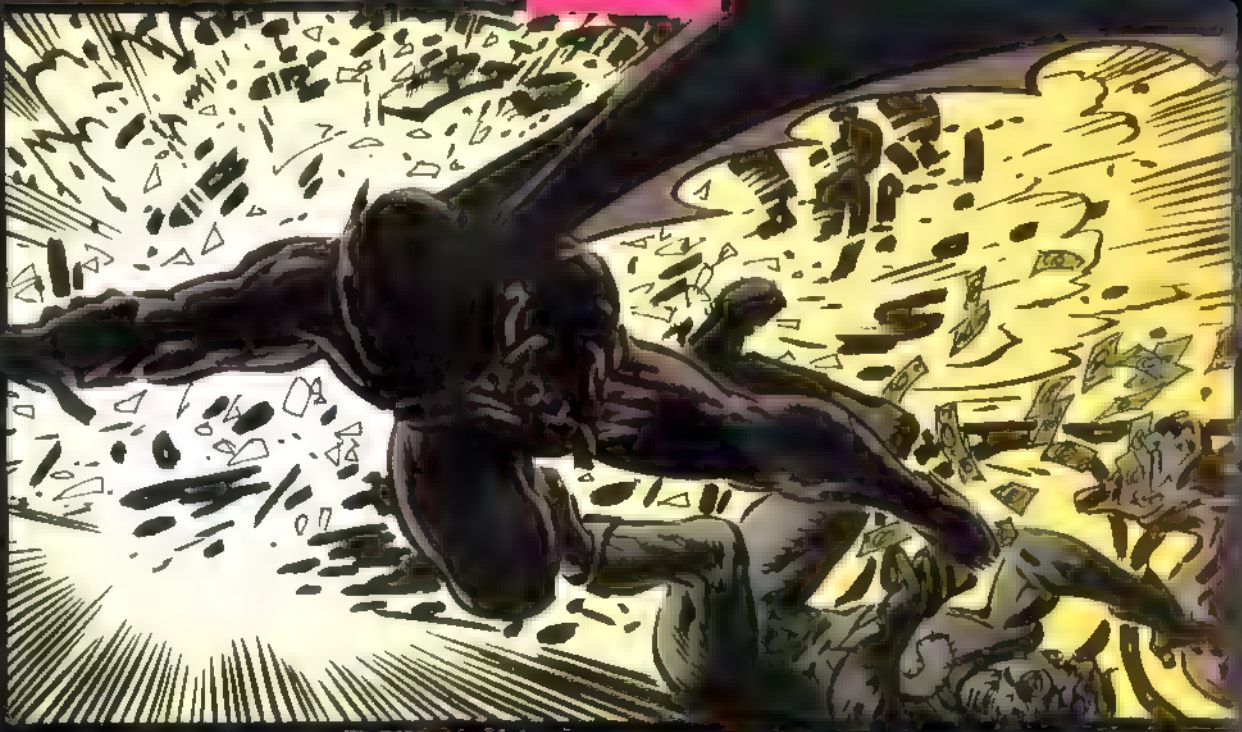
DID YOU--
OW!

DID YOU--
UNNH!

DO YOU
HAVE ANOTHER
RIDDLE FOR ME,
RIDDLER?

DID YOU
FORGET--THE
DYNAMITE?

Ah-hee?



"DUMB LUCK SAVED ME FROM A BAT-ASTROPHE."

"THE BATMAN WAS NO FLATFOOT CIVIL SERVANT."



OH, I'D PROVE
MY WORTH TO
HIM.

I WASN'T GOING
TO PLAY SECOND
FIDDLE TO THE
JOKER OR
TWO-FACE OR
ANY OF THE
WANNABES!



THE BATMAN
WAS SAINT AND
DEVIL TO ME...

...A FOIL TO
MATCH WITS
AGAINST, BUT AN
ADVERSARY TO
BE WARY OF.



YOU DIMWITS THINK
I CREATE MY RIDDLES
BECAUSE I WANT TO
BE CAUGHT.

WHAT NAIVE,
PEDESTRIAN
THINKING.

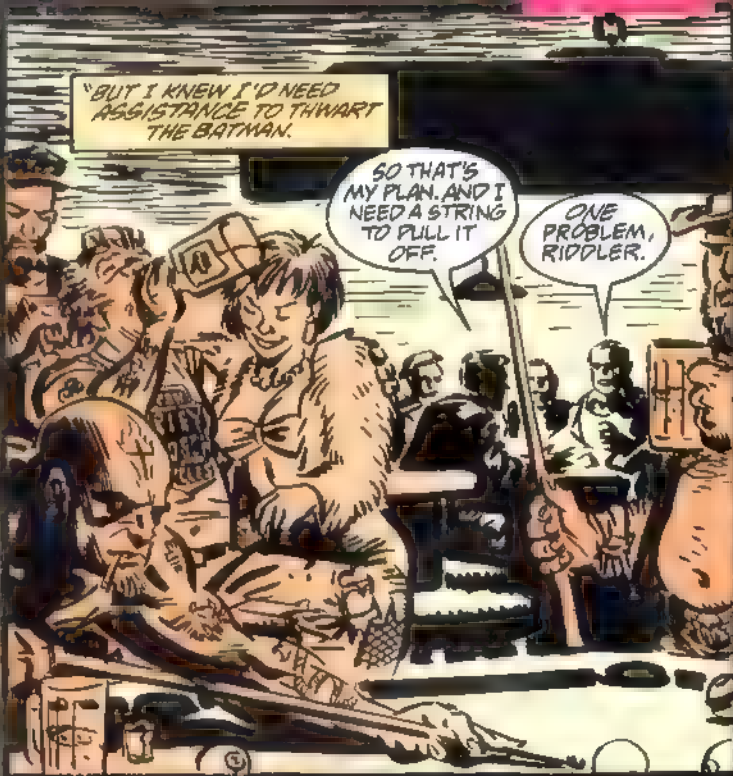


TO ME CRIME IS
PERFORMANCE
ART!

AND THAT'S
WHAT YOU
PSYCHOBABLERS
SHARE WITH THE
THUGS OF THE
WORLD.



LACK OF
VISION.



"BUT I KNEW I'D NEED ASSISTANCE TO THWART THE BATMAN."

SO THAT'S MY PLAN. AND I NEED A STRING TO PULL IT OFF.

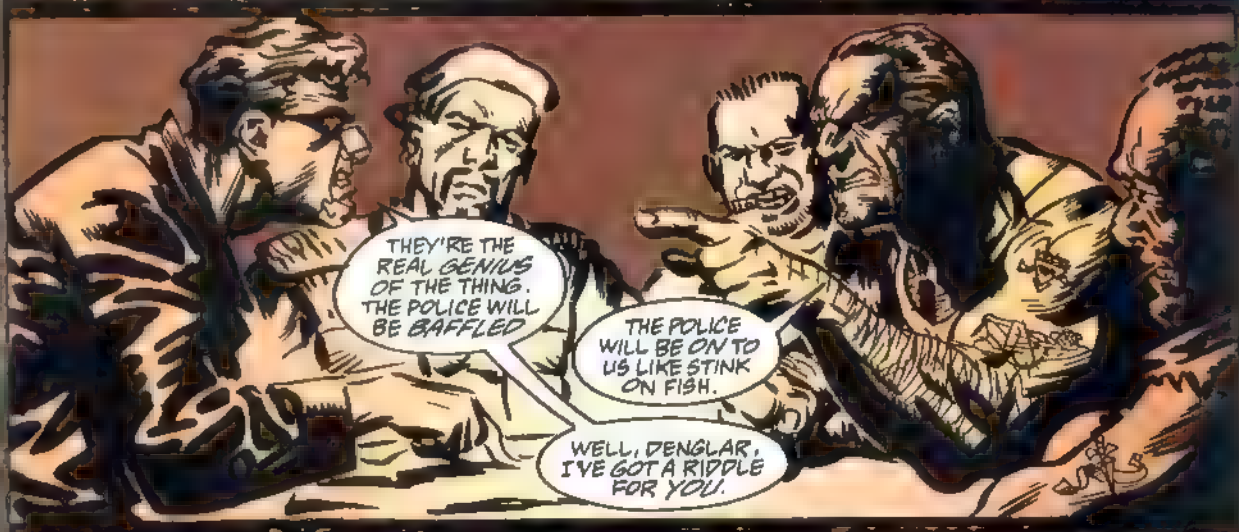
ONE PROBLEM, RIDDLER.



YOU'RE A HEADCASE. I DON'T MIX WITH HEADCASES.

BUT THE SCORE IS BRILLIANT.

BUT ALL THE RIDDLES AND JUNK.



THEY'RE THE REAL GENIUS OF THE THING. THE POLICE WILL BE BAFFLED

THE POLICE WILL BE ON TO US LIKE STINK ON FISH.

WELL, DENGLAR, I'VE GOT A RIDDLE FOR YOU.



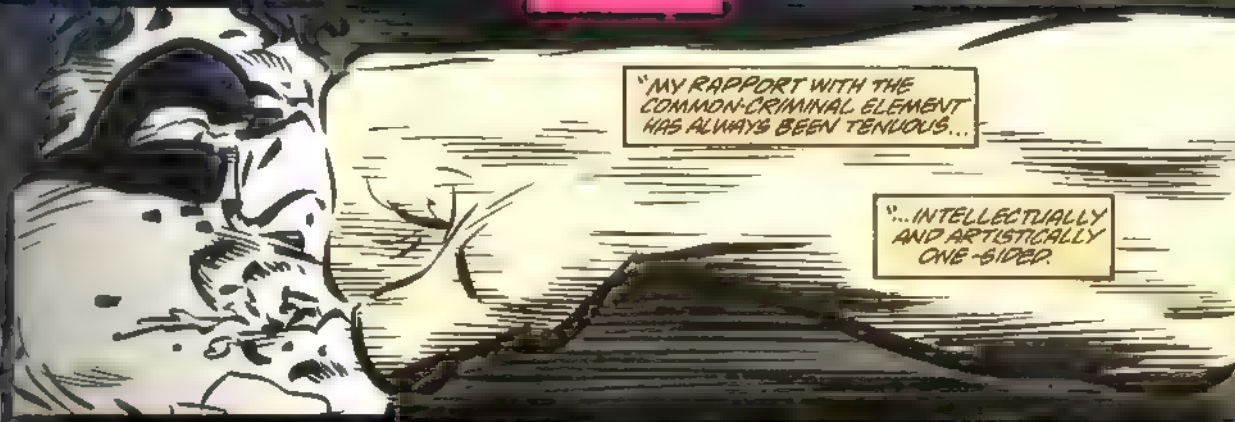
HOW DO YOU KEEP AN IDIOT WAITING?



I PUNNO.



I'LL TELL YOU LATER.



"MY RAPPORT WITH THE
COMMON-CRIMINAL ELEMENT
HAS ALWAYS BEEN TENUOUS...

"...INTELLECTUALLY
AND ARTISTICALLY
ONE-SIDED.



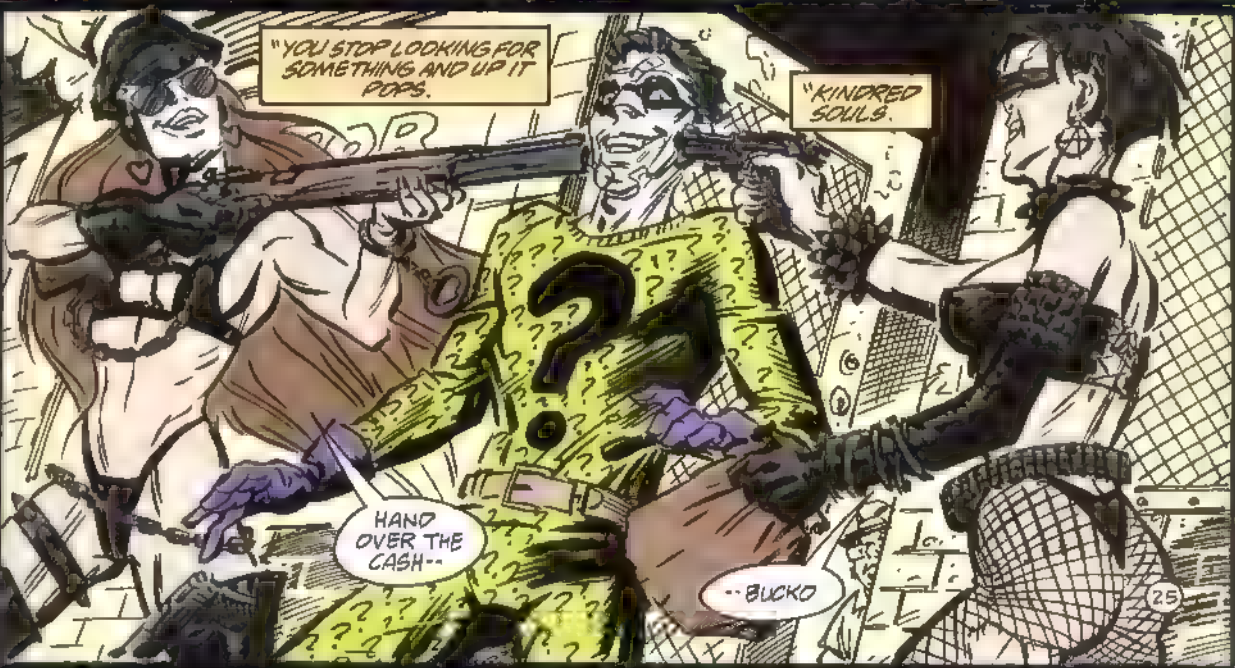
"SO I WAS FORCED
TO GATHER FUNDS
FOR MY NEXT CAPER
ON MY OWN

"I DID IT THE OLD-
FASHIONED WAY
UNCREATIVE
STICK-UPS AND
WORK-A-PAY
MUGGINGS



"I HAD RESIGNED
MYSELF TO A SOLO
CAREER.

"BUT ISN'T
THAT HOW IT
ALWAYS IS?"



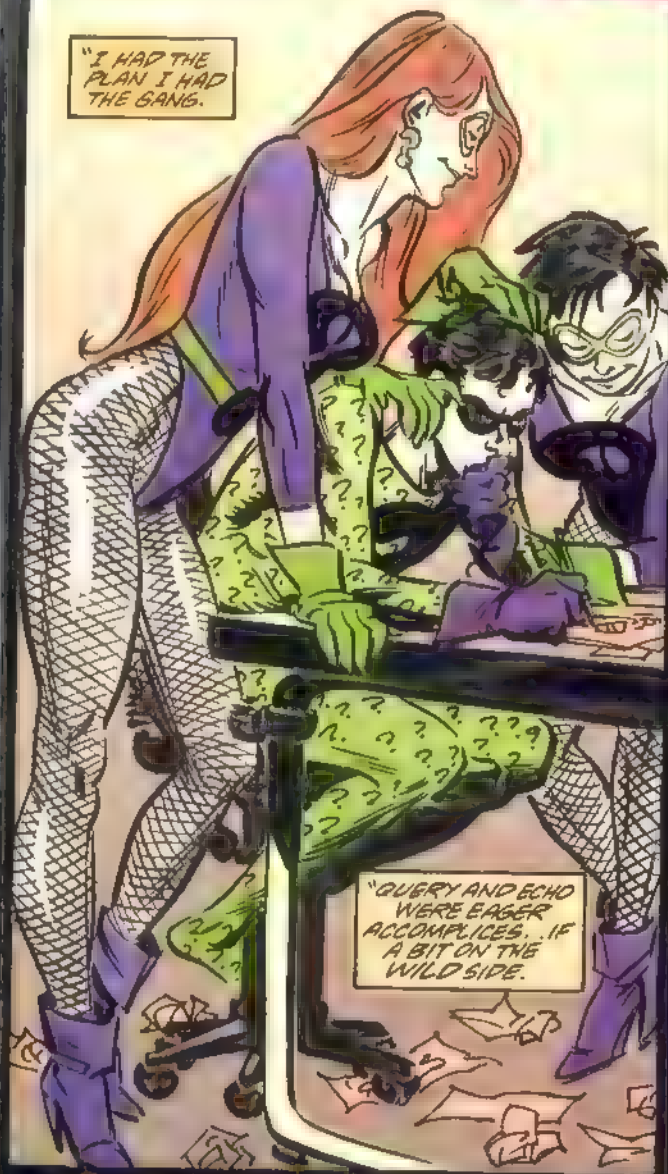
"YOU STOP LOOKING FOR
SOMETHING AND UP IT
POPS.

"KINDRED
SOULS.

HAND
OVER THE
CASH--

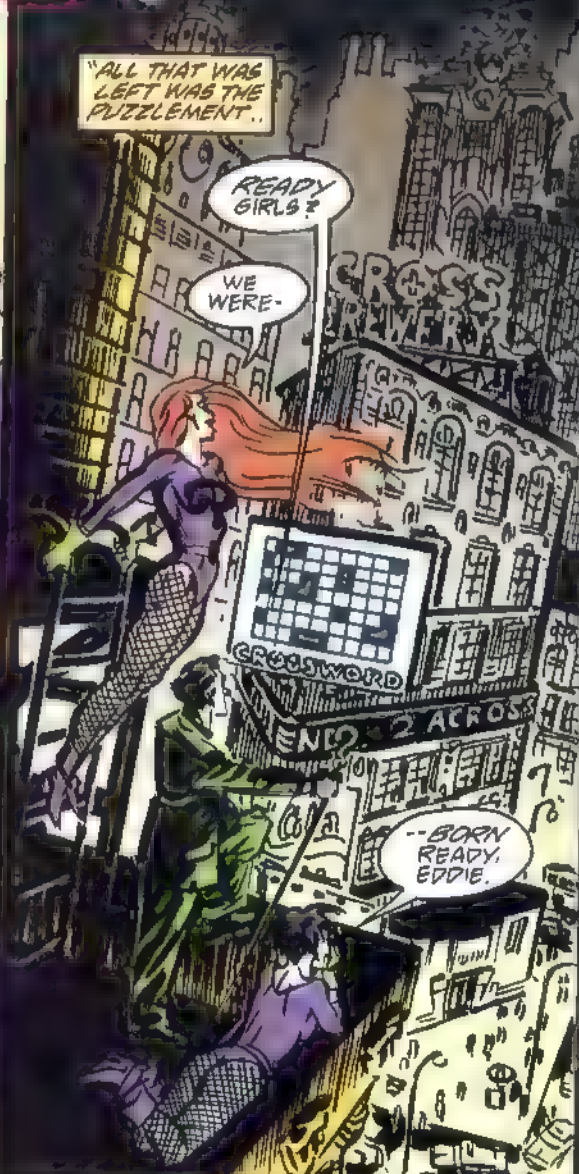
--BUCKO

"I HAD THE
PLAN I HAD
THE GANG."



"QUERY AND ECHO
WERE EAGER
ACCOMPLICES... IF
A BIT ON THE
WILD SIDE."

"ALL THAT WAS
LEFT WAS THE
PUZZLEMENT.."



READY
GIRLS?

WE
WERE-

CROSSWORD

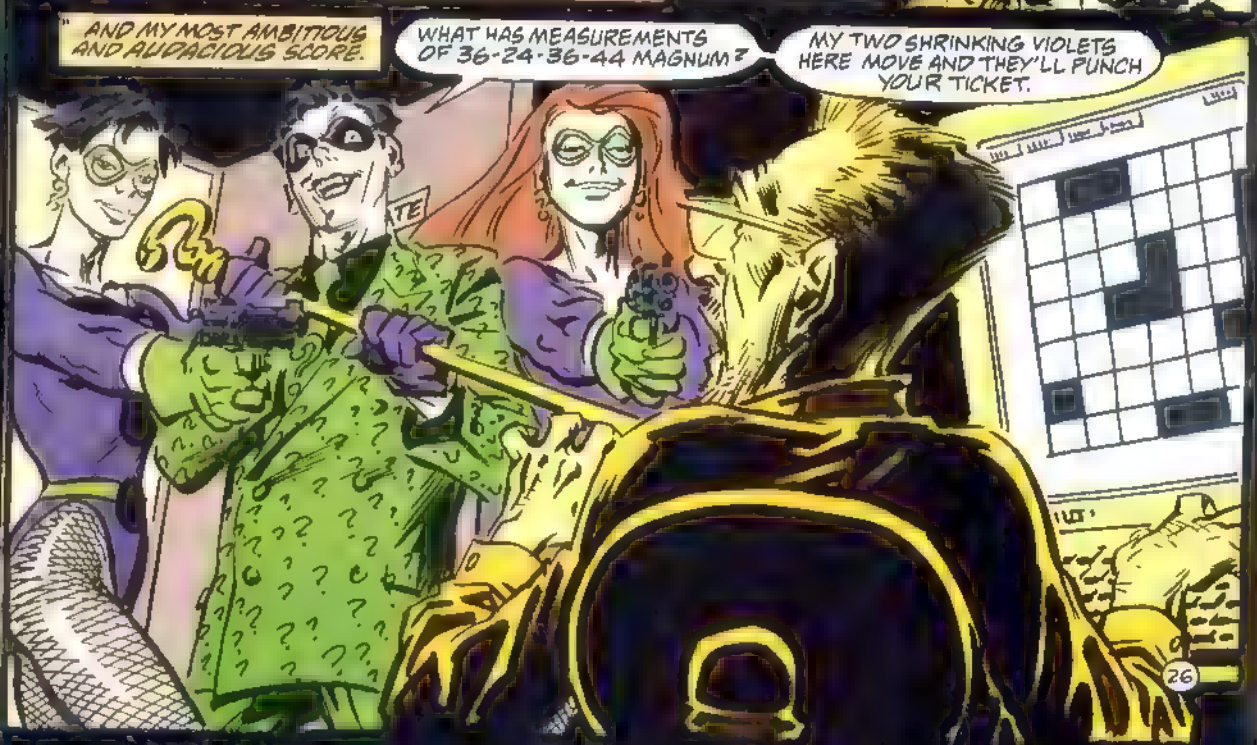
END 2 ACROSS

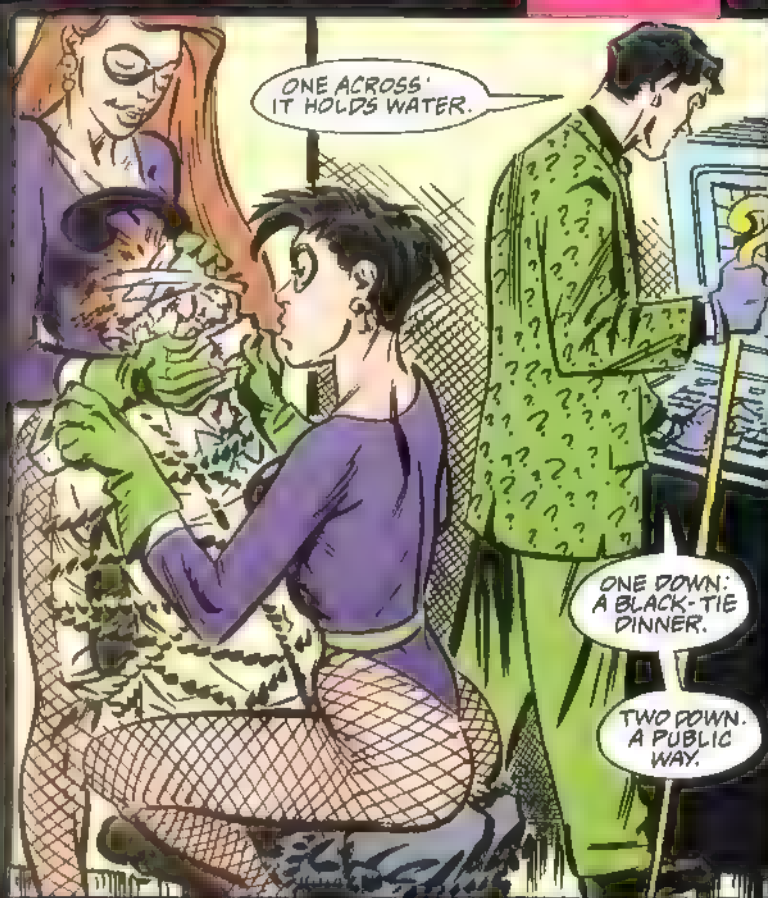
--BORN
READY,
EDDIE.

"AND MY MOST AMBITIOUS
AND AUDACIOUS SCORE."

WHAT WAS MEASUREMENTS
OF 36-24-36-44 MAGNUM?

MY TWO SHRINKING VIOLETS
HERE MOVE AND THEY'LL PUNCH
YOUR TICKET.

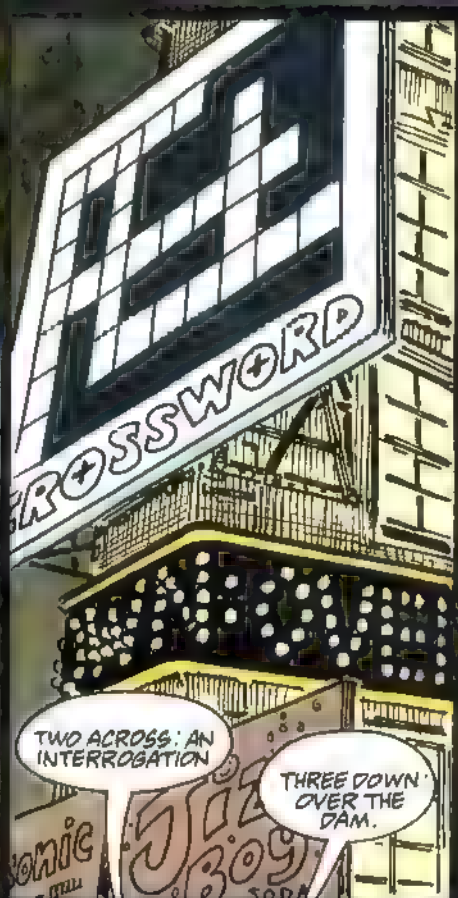




ONE ACROSS:
IT HOLDS WATER.

ONE DOWN:
A BLACK-TIE
DINNER.

TWO DOWN:
A PUBLIC
WAY.



TWO ACROSS: AN
INTERROGATION

THREE DOWN:
OVER THE
DAM.



"SUNDAY'S
OTHER
BROTHER?"

IT MEANS
TUESDAY. IT'S
FROM AN OLD
ENGLISH
RHYME

NEVER
WAS GOOD AT
THOSE THINGS,
LIEUTENANT



I USED TO
DO THEM ON
STAKEOUTS.

THIS RIDDLER'S A STONE
PSYCHO. WE GOING TO BRING
THE WHOLE SQUAD IN ON
THIS?

AND
THEN
SOME.



I THINK
A CONCERNED
CITIZEN MIGHT
HELP US OUT,
STAN.

HUH?

"MY MISSION WAS TWO-FOLD:

"TO INTRIGUE HIM
AND CONFOUND
HIM.

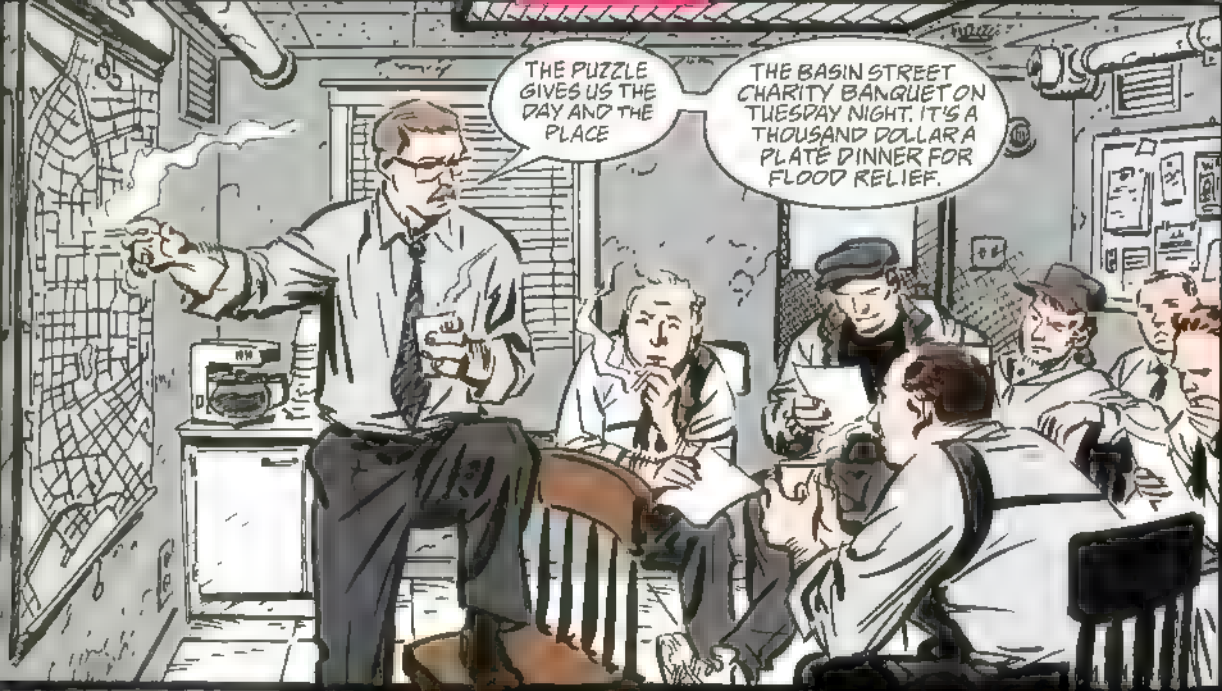


"I HAD TO BE MORE
CIRCUMSPECT, LESS
OBVIOUS AND MORE
DEVISIVE.

"I HAD TO FALL
BACK ON MY TRUE
TALENT.

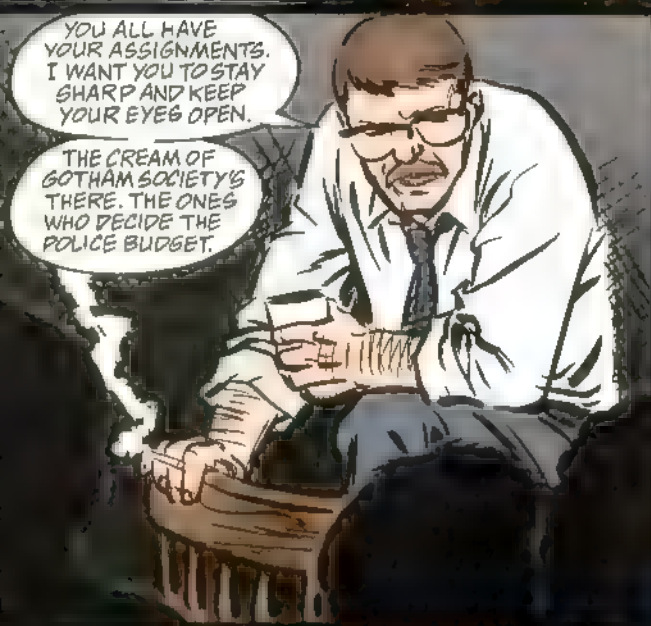


CHEATING.



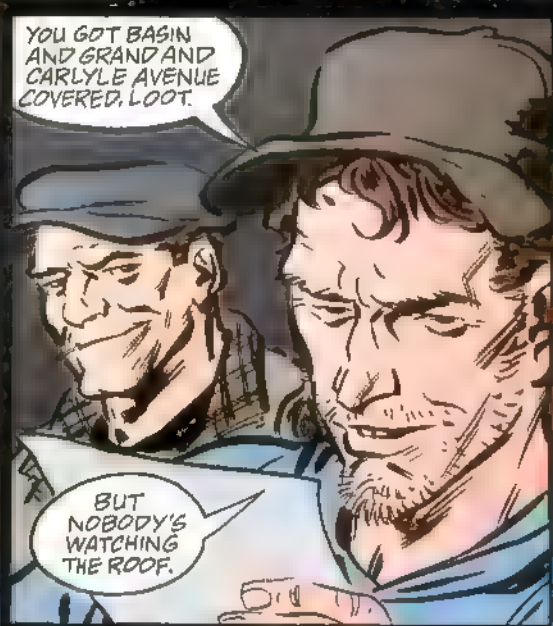
THE PUZZLE
GIVES US THE
DAY AND THE
PLACE

THE BASIN STREET
CHARITY BANQUET ON
TUESDAY NIGHT. IT'S A
THOUSAND DOLLAR A
PLATE DINNER FOR
FLOOD RELIEF.



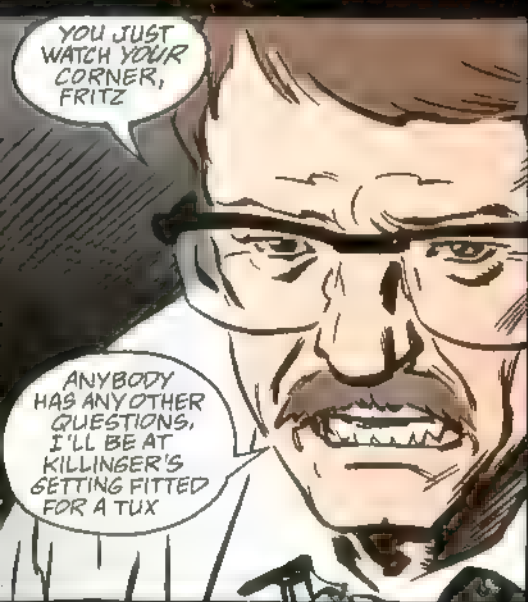
YOU ALL HAVE
YOUR ASSIGNMENTS.
I WANT YOU TO STAY
SHARP AND KEEP
YOUR EYES OPEN.

THE CREAM OF
GOTHAM SOCIETY'S
THERE. THE ONES
WHO DECIDE THE
POLICE BUDGET.



YOU GOT BASIN
AND GRAND AND
CARLYLE AVENUE
COVERED, LOOT.

BUT
NOBODY'S
WATCHING
THE ROOF.



YOU JUST
WATCH YOUR
CORNER,
FRITZ

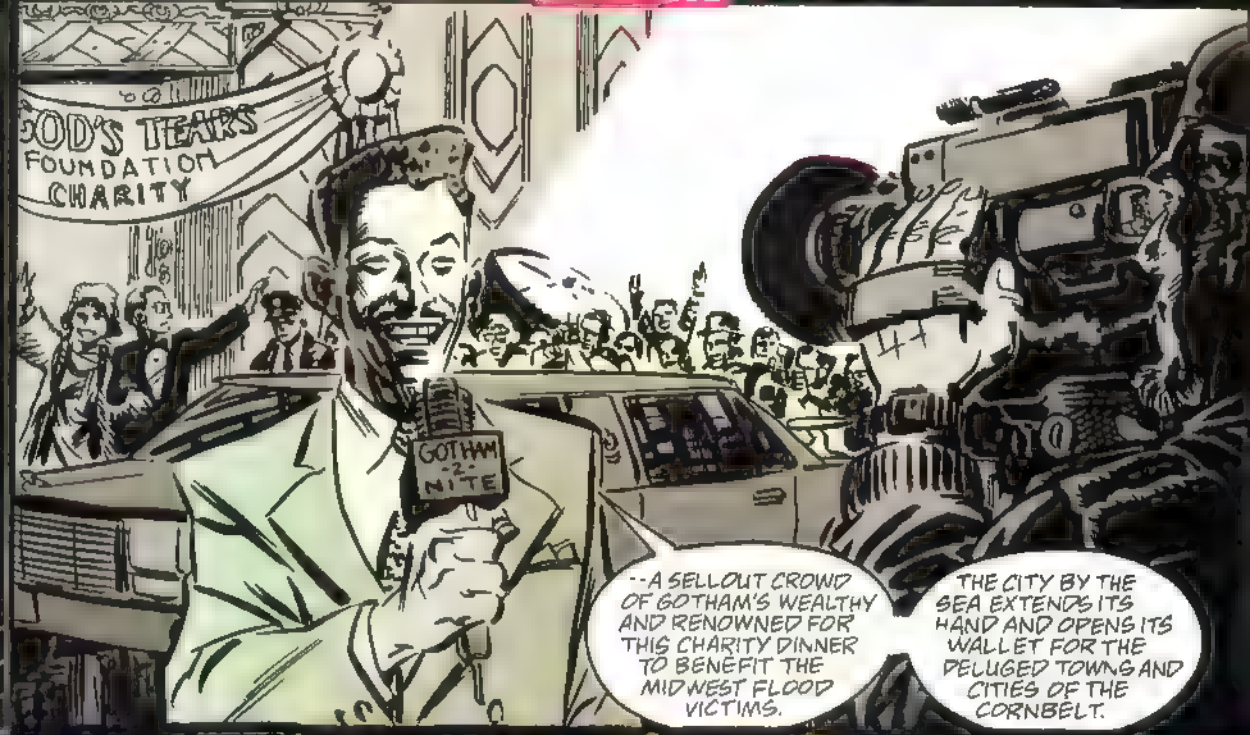
ANYBODY
HAS ANY OTHER
QUESTIONS,
I'LL BE AT
KILLINGER'S
GETTING FITTED
FOR A TUX



GORDON'S LEAVING
THE ROOF WIDE
OPEN, STAN.

MORE FLIES
WITH HONEY,
FRITZIE.

WHAT'S
THAT
SUPPOSED
TO MEAN?



--A SELLOUT CROWD
OF GOTHAM'S WEALTHY
AND RENOWNED FOR
THIS CHARITY DINNER
TO BENEFIT THE
MIDWEST FLOOD
VICTIMS.

THE CITY BY THE
SEA EXTENDS ITS
HAND AND OPENS ITS
WALLET FOR THE
DELUGED TOWNS AND
CITIES OF THE
CORNBELT.



ANYONE WHO'S
ANYONE IS HERE
TONIGHT.

NO SIGN
OF TROUBLE
UP HERE,
LIEUTENANT



HOW ARE YOU HOLDING UP?

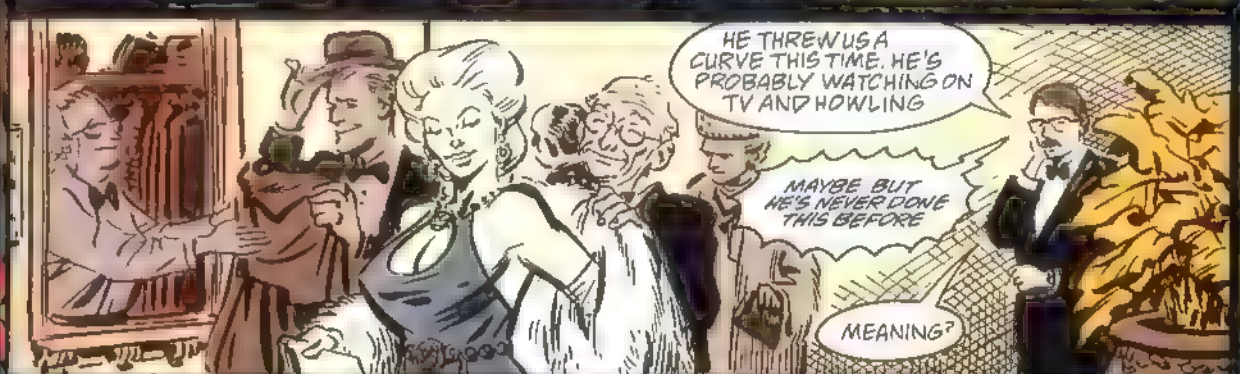
I'M NOT SURE WHICH IS WORSE-- STRANGLING IN THIS COLLAR OR DYING FOR A CIGARETTE.

SINCE WE'RE TALKING, I SUPPOSE YOU DON'T SEE ANYTHING?



NOT A SIGN

AND THE LIMOS ARE STARTING TO PULL UP TO TAKE OUR GUESTS AWAY.



HE THREW US A CURVE THIS TIME. HE'S PROBABLY WATCHING ON TV AND HOWLING

MAYBE BUT HE'S NEVER DONE THIS BEFORE

MEANING?



THE RIDDLER WANTS TO PROVE HE'S SMARTER THAN WE ARE

A SIMPLE FALSE ALARM WOULDN'T SATISFY HIM. MAYBE THIS IS A DIVERSION FOR US



A DECOY? BUT THE PUZZLE. IT POINTS TO THE BANQUET.

YOUR CHICAGO ACCENT IS SHOWING AGAIN

HM?

YOU SAID "BANK-WET!"

HOLD ON...



ARE YOU
STILL THERE?

THE PUZZLE
STILL WORKS



BUT NOT
THE WAY WE
THOUGHT.

HE THREW
US A BLIND,
LIEUTENANT.



I'M GOING
OFF LINE

BUT WHAT
ARE YOU--
CLIK!

RADIO.
SCAN POLICE
FREQUENCIES.



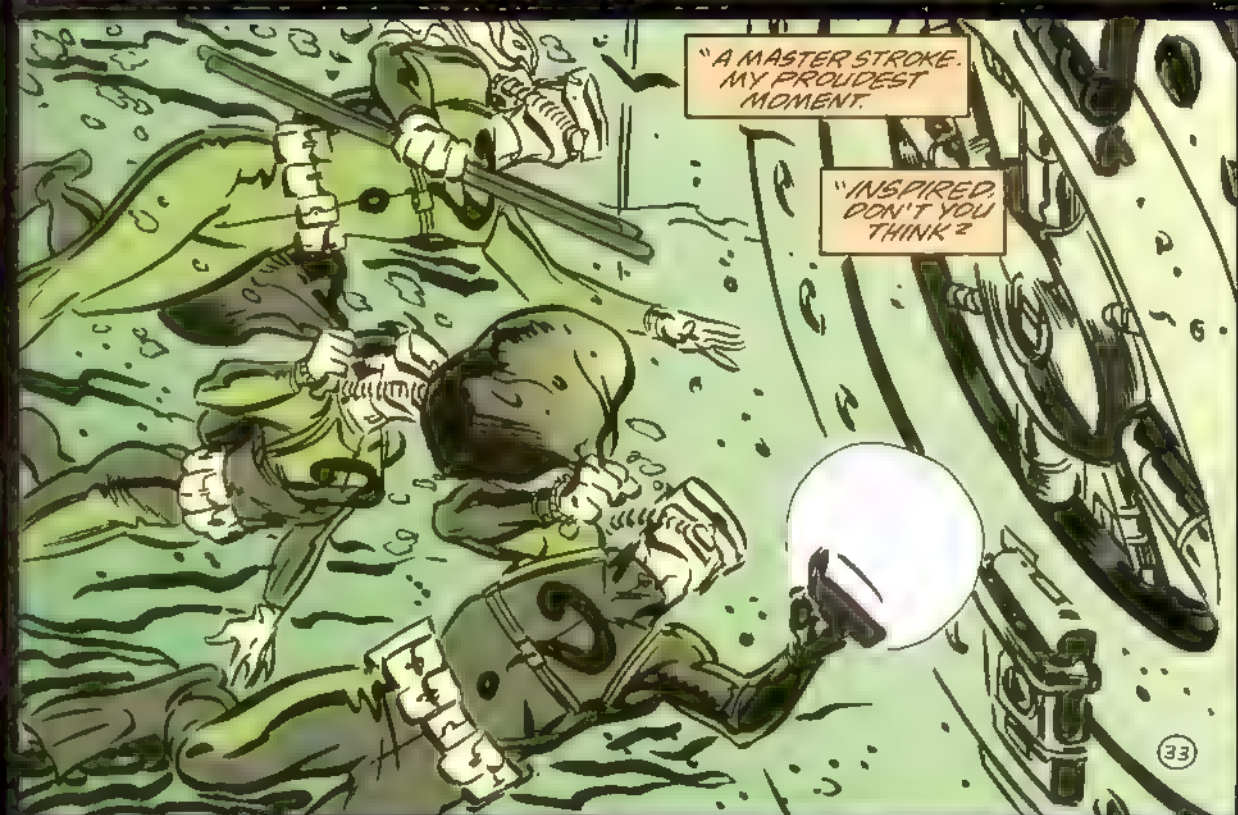
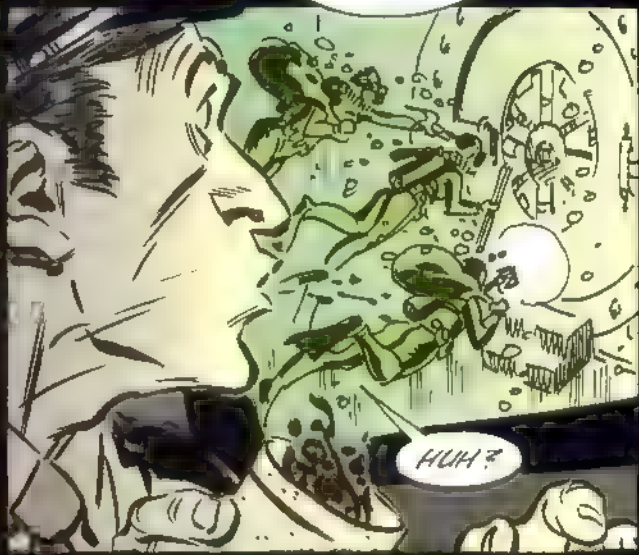
--RESPONDING
TO FUR SALON
BREAK-IN--

--UNIT ADAM
FIVE SEE THE
MAN--

--LOUD
DISTURBANCE
AT DVORAK AND
GRANGE--

--A WATER
MAIN BREAK--
RESERVOIR
AVENUE--

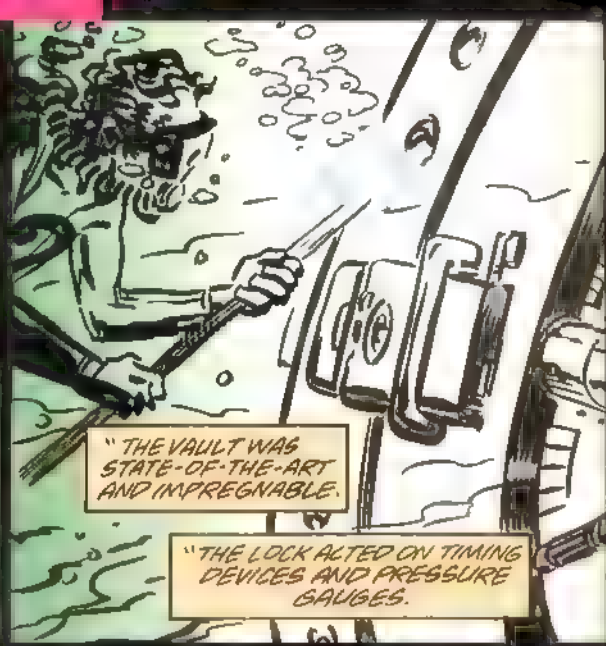
GOTCHA.





"THE RESERVOIR
STREET CASH
DEPOSITORY."

"A WAREHOUSE
FOR MONEY"

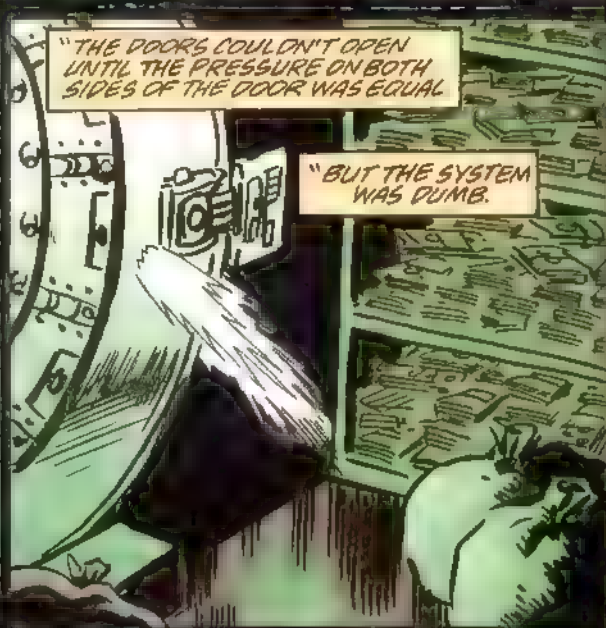


"THE VAULT WAS
STATE-OF-THE-ART
AND IMPREGNABLE."

"THE LOCK ACTED ON TIMING
DEVICES AND PRESSURE
GAUGES."

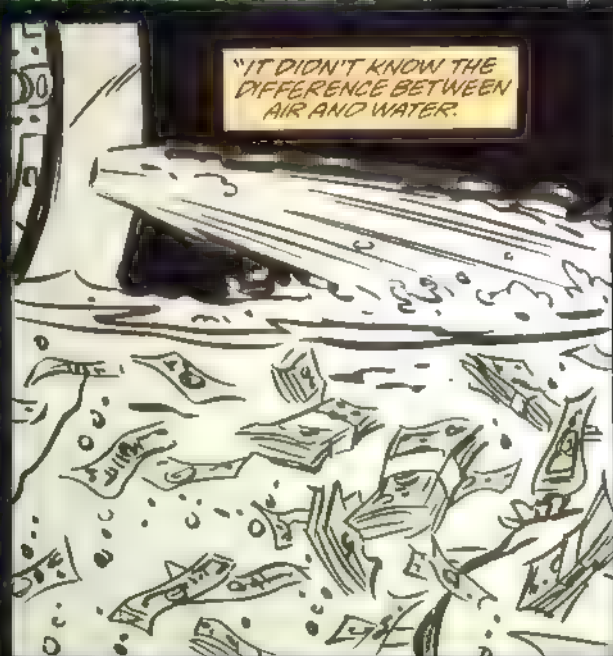


"INSIDE THE
VAULT WAS
AN AIRLESS
VACUUM."



"THE DOORS COULDN'T OPEN
UNTIL THE PRESSURE ON BOTH
SIDES OF THE DOOR WAS EQUAL"

"BUT THE SYSTEM
WAS DUMB."



"IT DIDN'T KNOW THE
DIFFERENCE BETWEEN
AIR AND WATER."



"A RIVER
OF CASH."



THIS ONE'S A RIP, JIM.

THIS RIDDLER THREW US A CURVE.



THE CLUES MATCH THE CRIME BUT NOT THE CROSSWORD PUZZLE ON THE BREWERY BUILDING.

THE THREE BELOW-STREET LEVELS ARE FLOODED

THE CREEP BLEW THE WATER MAINS WHEN HE BLASTED A HOLE IN THE VAULT-LEVEL WALL.



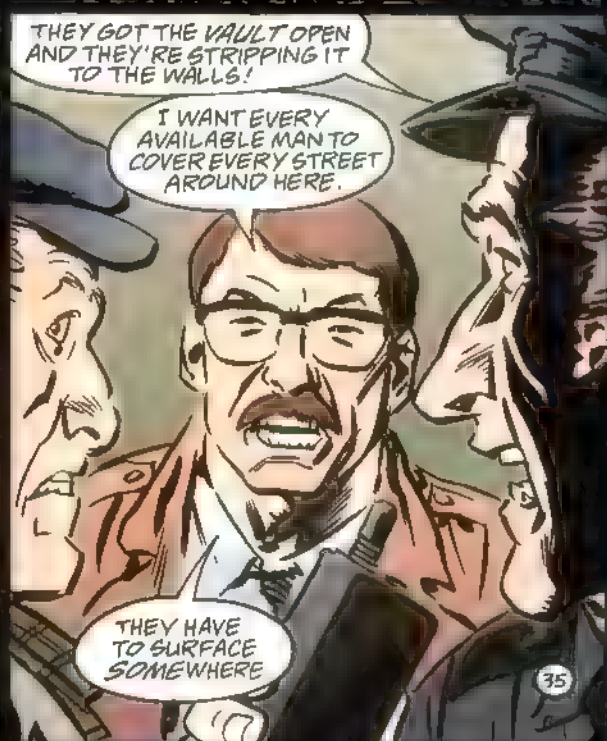
WHAT'S THE WORD ON THOSE DIVERS?

ON THE WAY.

THEY'D BETTER HUSTLE. ANY LUCK GETTING THAT MAIN SHUT OFF?

GUESS WHO WELDED THE VALVES OPEN?

OH MAN...



THEY GOT THE VAULT OPEN AND THEY'RE STRIPPING IT TO THE WALLS!

I WANT EVERY AVAILABLE MAN TO COVER EVERY STREET AROUND HERE.

THEY HAVE TO SURFACE SOMEWHERE



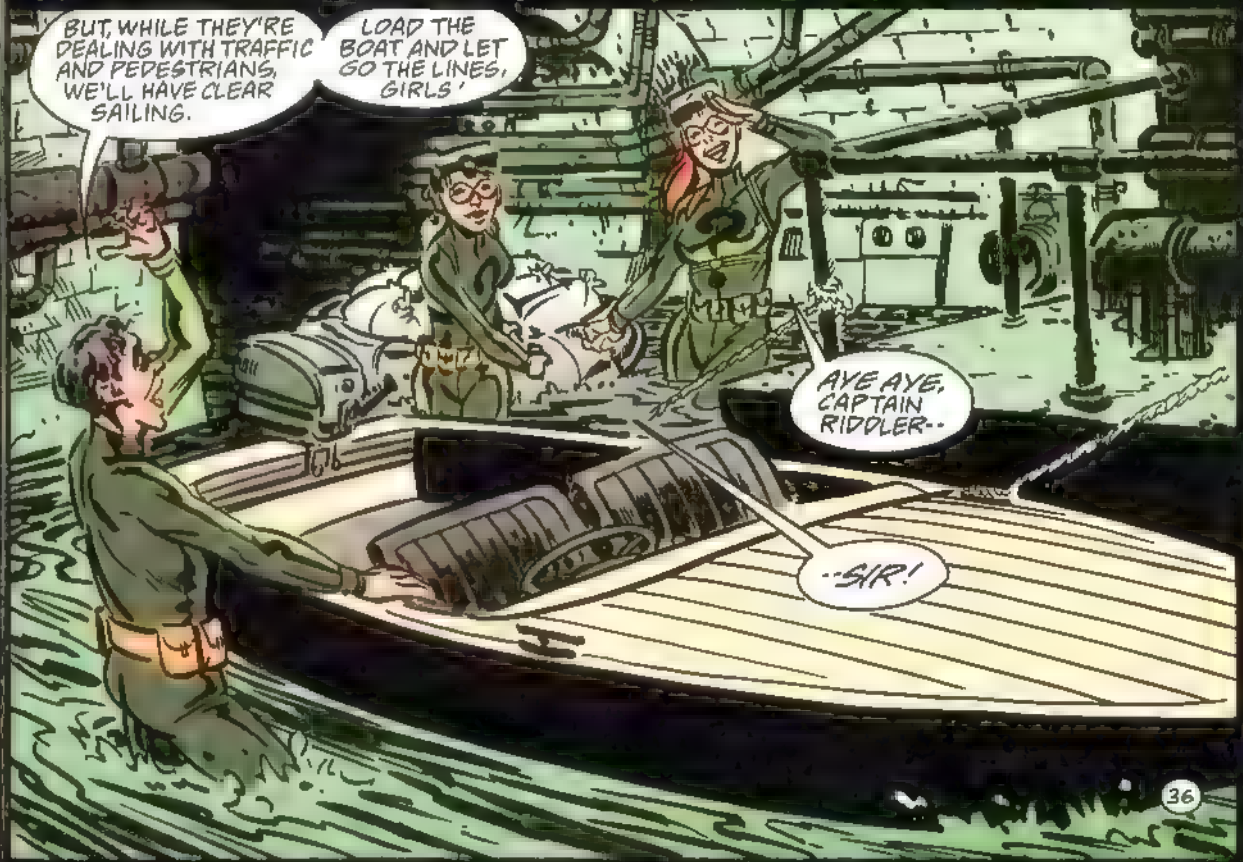
WEEEEEE!

THE WORK'S NOT OVER, LADIES.



THE GETAWAY IS THE SQUEAKER PART OF THIS

THE COPS WILL BE COVERING THE STREETS LIKE CONFETTI.

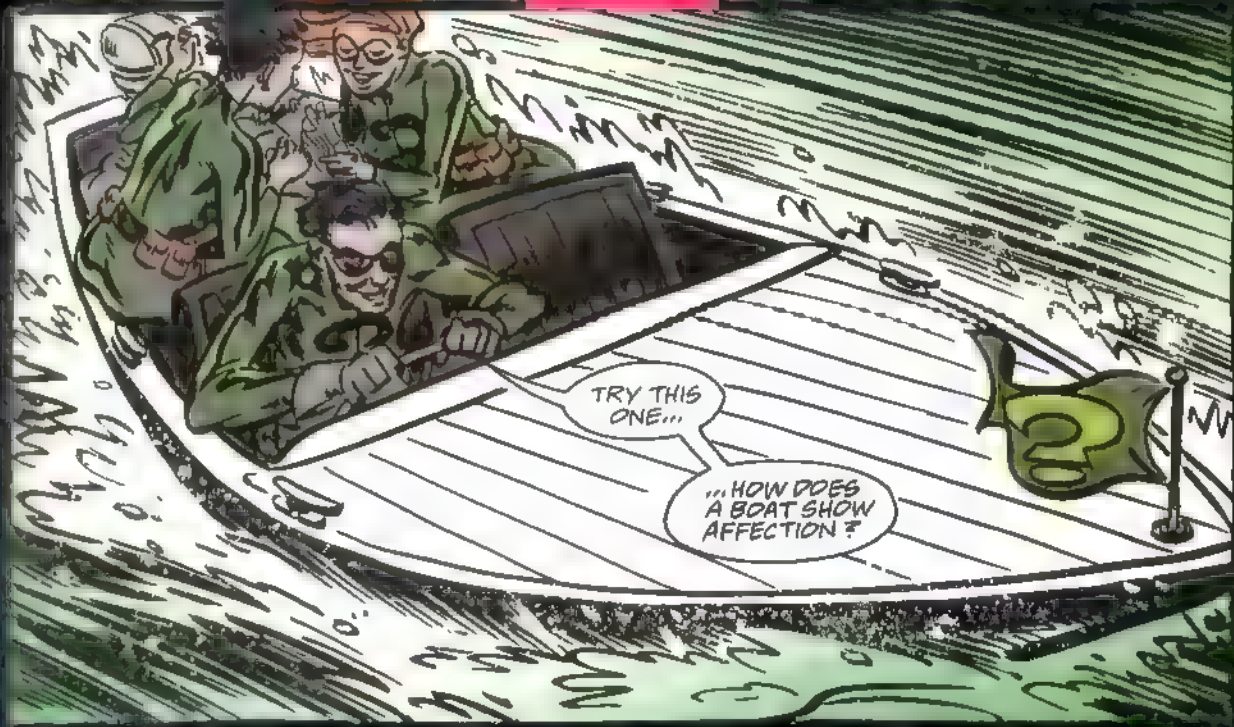


BUT, WHILE THEY'RE DEALING WITH TRAFFIC AND PEDESTRIANS, WE'LL HAVE CLEAR SAILING.

LOAD THE BOAT AND LET GO THE LINES, GIRLS!

AVE AVE, CAPTAIN RIDDLER..

..SIR!

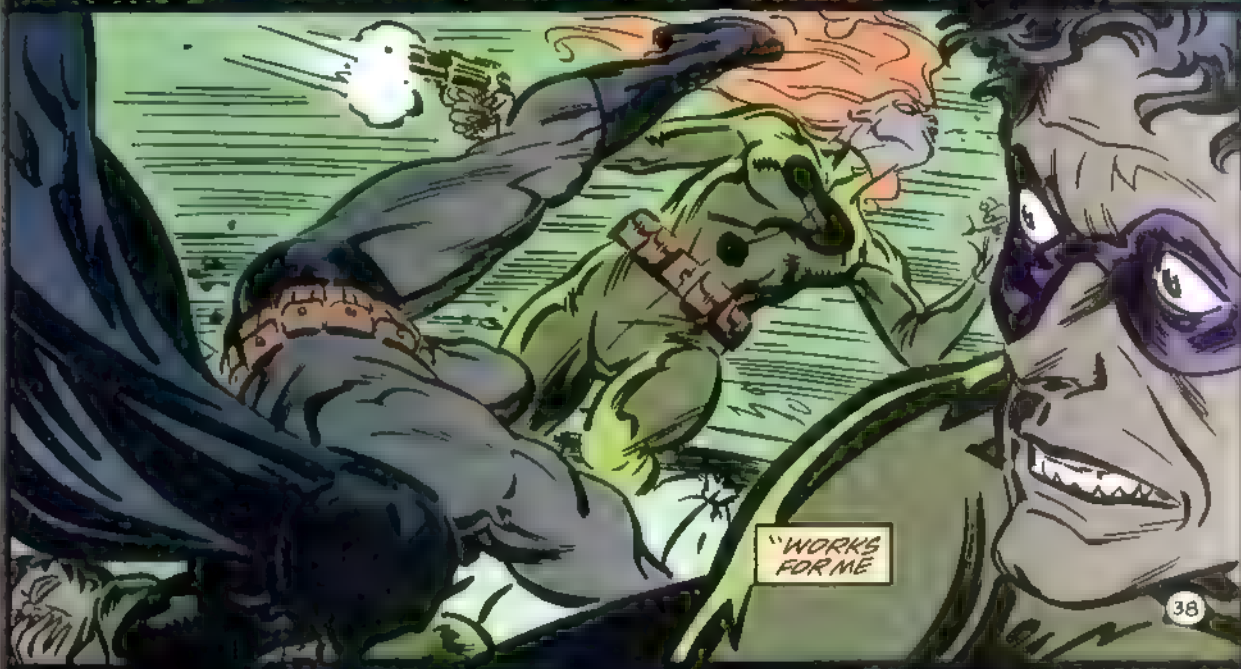




"I HEARD HE DRESSES
LIKE A FLYING RAT TO
PUT THE SCARE INTO
EVERYBODY."



"HE FIGURES HE CAN
FRIGHTEN HIS ENEMIES
INTO SUBMISSION."



"WORKS
FOR ME"

A three-panel comic strip. The top panel shows Batman in a black suit and Riddler in a yellow suit with a large red question mark on his chest, both lying on their backs in a sewer. The middle panel shows Batman on his hands and knees, looking at Riddler who is still on his back. The bottom panel is a close-up of Riddler's face on the left and Batman's face on the right, both wearing their masks.

"THE GIRLS WERE
GIVING AS GOOD
AS THEY GOT."

"WELL, NOT QUITE
AS GOOD AS THEY
GOT."

WONDERING
HOW I FOUND YOU,
RIDDLER?

EEEP.

HOW IS
A LOW-LIFE
HOOD LIKE
A SEWER?



THEY BOTH
SEEK THEIR OWN
LEVEL!

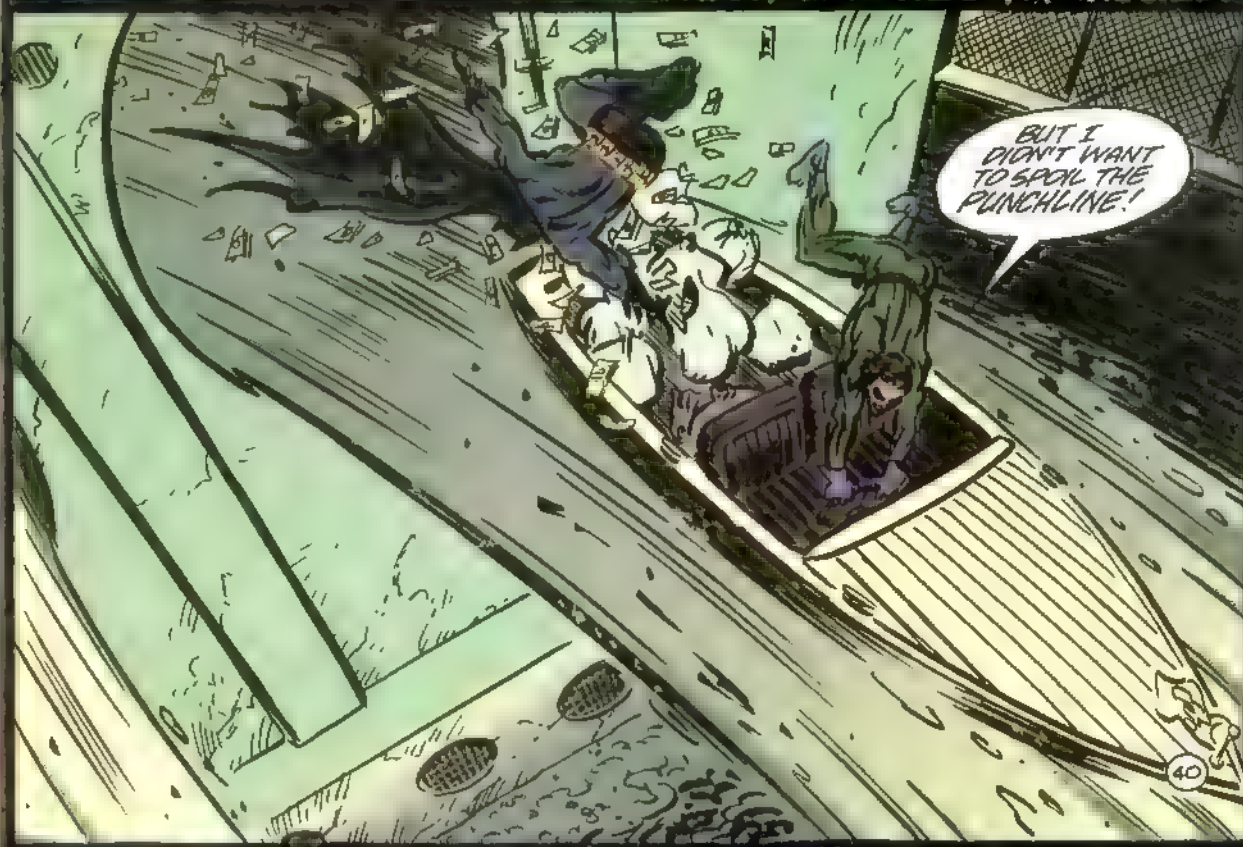
LAME,
BATMAN LIKE
YOU'RE
GOING TO
BE!



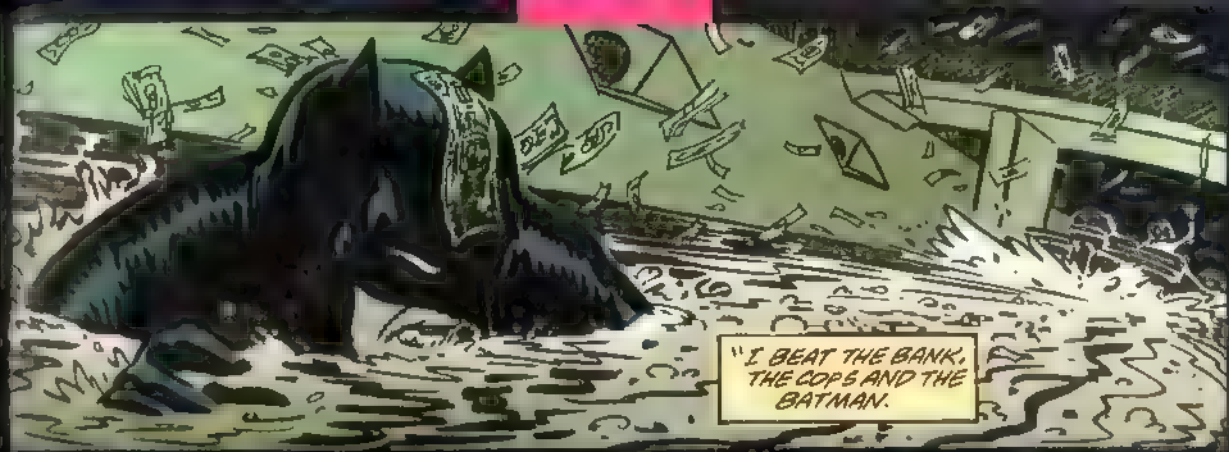
END
OF THE
LINE...

S' FUNNY

THAT'S WHAT
I WAS GOING
TO SAY.



BUT I
DIDN'T WANT
TO SPOIL THE
PUNCHLINE!



"I BEAT THE BANK.
THE COPS AND THE
BATMAN."

"AND THE TWO MILL THAT
WAS LEFT IN THE BOAT
WASN'T BAD EITHER."

NOK
NOK
NOK

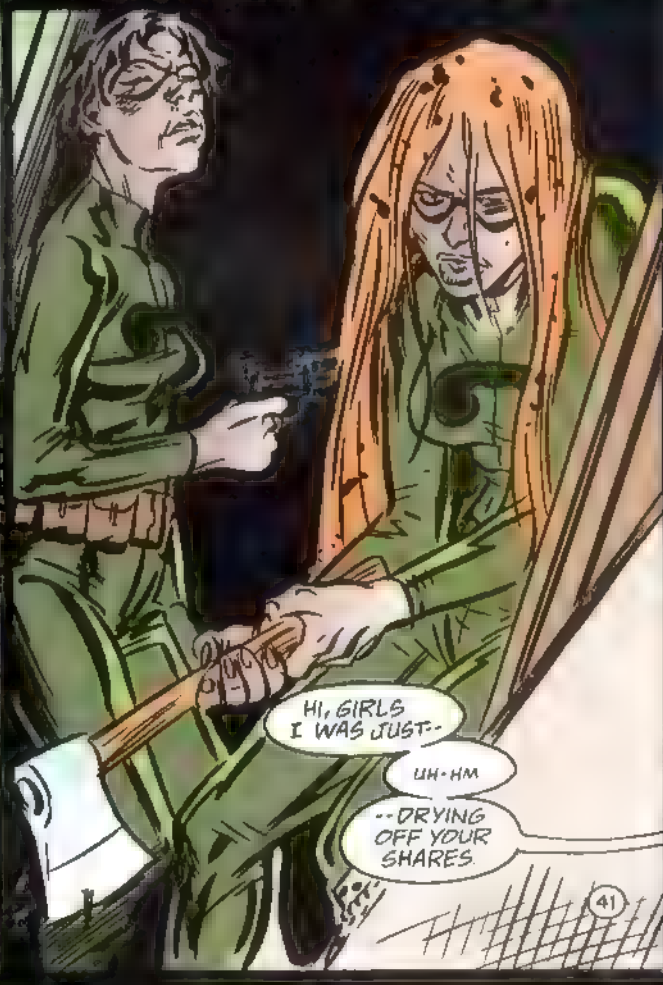
GO
AWAY!



"AFTER EXPENSES
AND A THREE-WAY
SPLIT, OF COURSE."

BOZ?

OH!



HI, GIRLS
I WAS JUST--

UH-HM

--DRYING
OFF YOUR
SHARES



BUT BESIDES
THE MONEY AND THE
SATISFACTION AND
GIDDINESS, THE
RESERVOIR SCORE
HAD GIVEN ME ONE
OTHER PRECIOUS
COMMODITY...



"CREDIBILITY."

THE DEPOSITORY
JOB WAS SWEET.
RIDDLER HAD THE
COPS GOIN' TOPSY
TURVY

LET'S HEAR
YOUR LATEST.
WE MIGHT
THROW IN



KIDNAPPING

SOME PAMPERED LITTLE
CHILDREN, EASY TO
TRANSPORT AND
CONCEAL

THE
RANSOM
WOULD
BE IN THE
MILLIONS.



I'M
OUTTA
HERE.

NO KIDSNATCHES.
FEDS CARVE YOU UP
FOR BAIT ON THEM.

EVERYBODY
GETS BURNED
ON A RANSOM
DEAL.



TAKE
A PILL,
BOYS.

THESE BABIES
ARE OVER FOUR
HUNDRED YEARS
OLD.



WHAT MUSICAL
INSTRUMENT DOESN'T
TELL THE TRUTH?

HOW DO YOU SNEAK
INTO AN OPERA
HOUSE?

WHY DID THE
COMPOSER
STOP WATCHING
TELEVISION?



THIS GUY'S
GIVING ME A
GUT-ACHE

WHEN DID
YOU RECEIVE
THIS?

IT WAS
DELIVERED THIS
EVENING THE
BOMB SQUAD
TOOK AN HOUR
TO CLEAR IT



COULD BE A
MUSIC-RELATED CRIME
OR ANOTHER DIVERSION
TACTIC.

HE'S GETTING
COCKY. MAYBE I
SHOULD PURSUE
THE OBVIOUS



THAT'S
AS GOOD
A--

LIEUTENANT,
THE BOMB SQUAD
CLEARED THE OTHER
PART OF THE
PACKAGE



SHOULD WE
HOLD HIM OR
READ HIM HIS
RIGHTS?

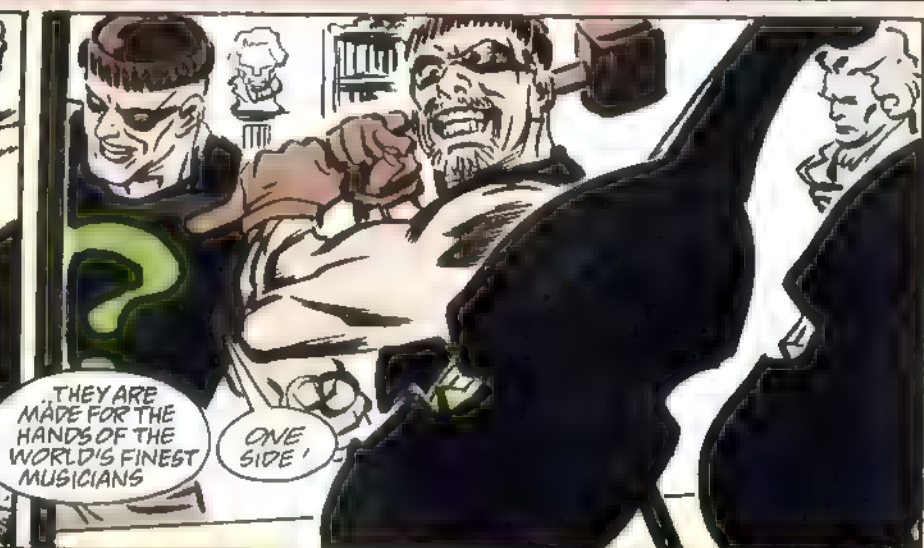


NO.

NOT MY BABIES...



THEY'RE OF NO USE TO YOU... THEY BELONG TO THE WORLD...



THEY ARE MADE FOR THE HANDS OF THE WORLD'S FINEST MUSICIANS

ONE SIDE!



EXACTLY. EACH OF THESE INSTRUMENTS IS ONE OF A KIND SO PRECIOUS AND RARE THAT THEY ARE ONLY LENT TO THE IMPRESARIOS.

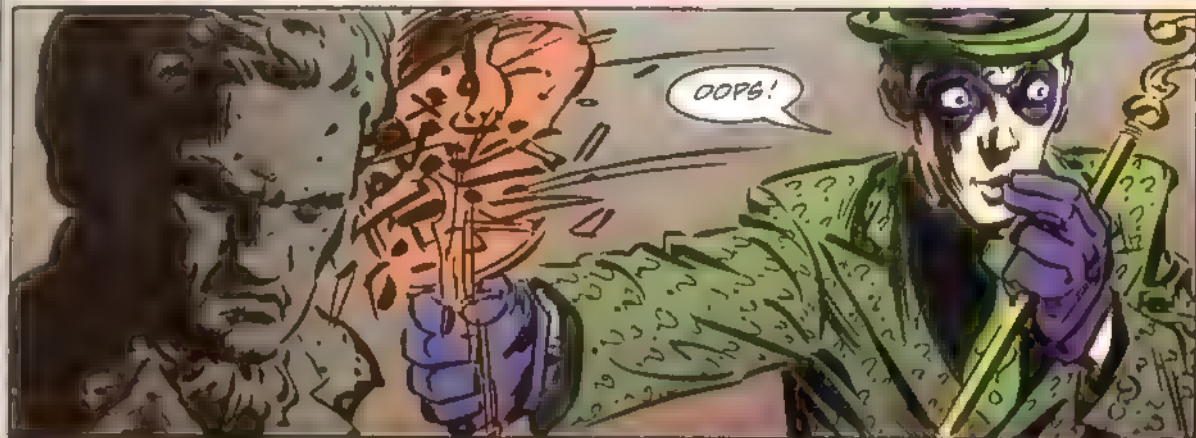
SOME ARE VALUED AT A MILLION OR MORE, HM?

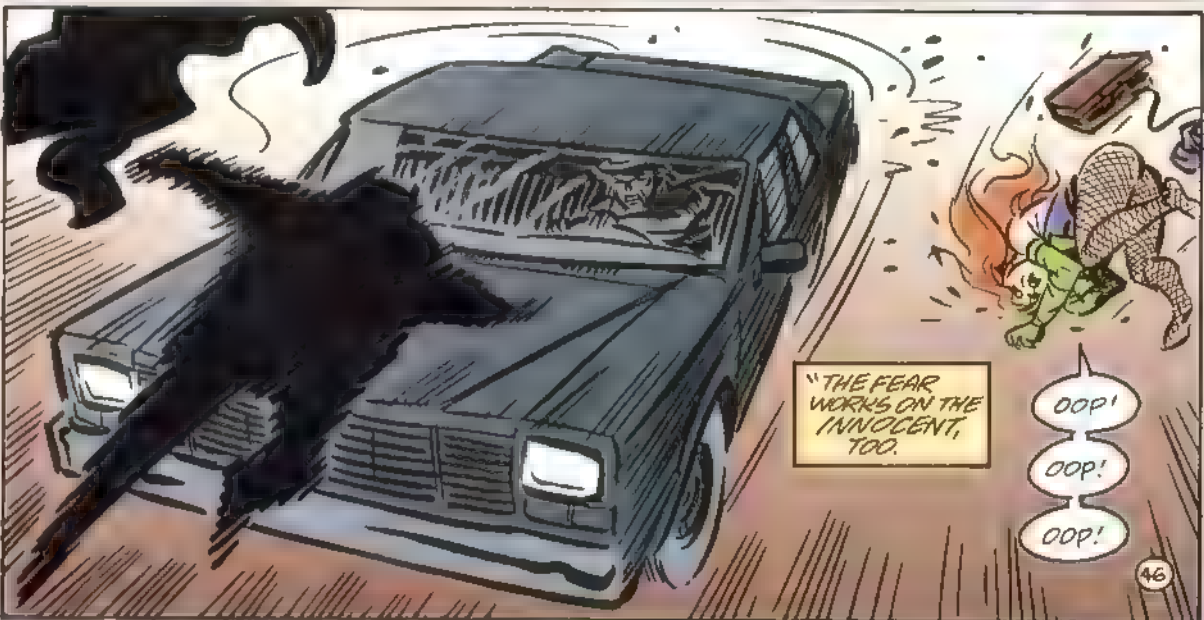
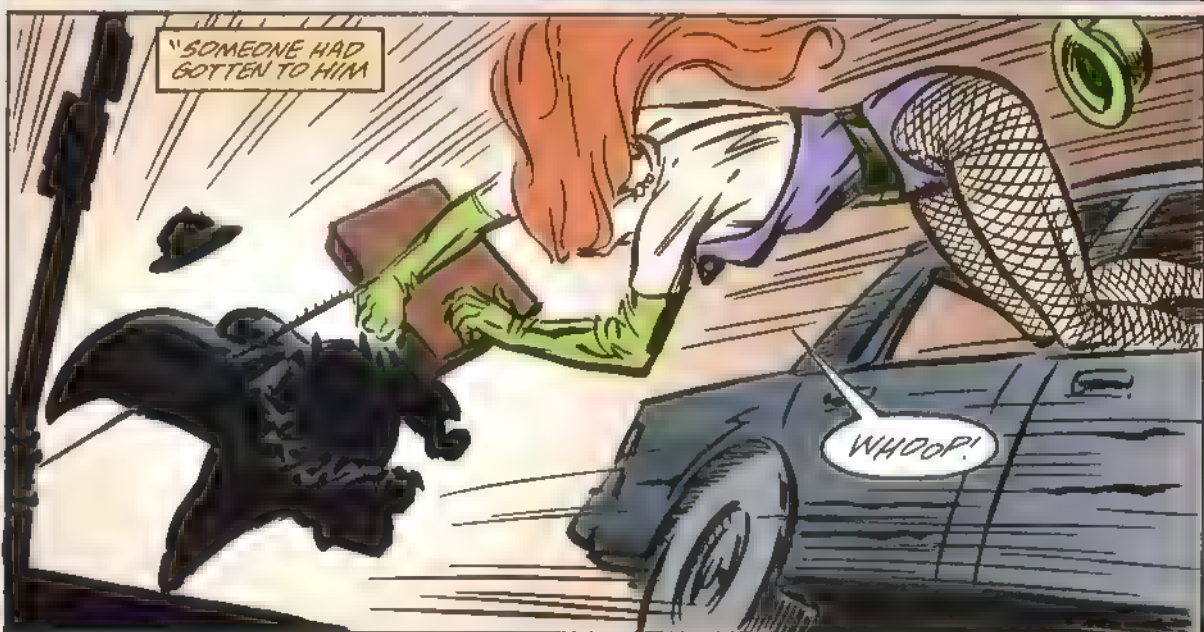


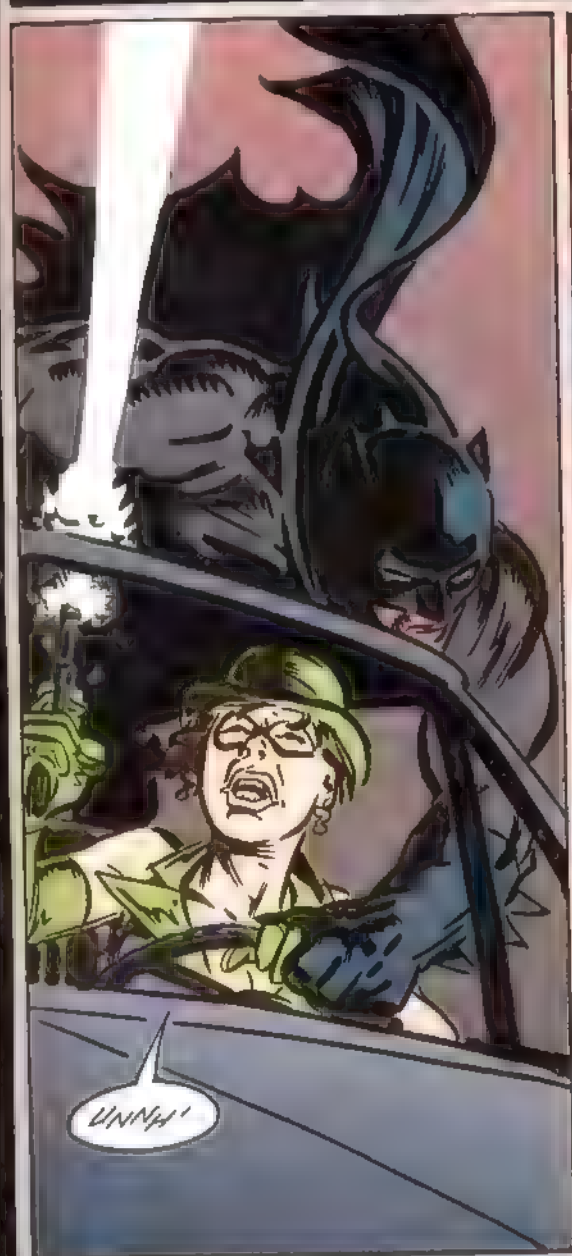
IF ONE WERE TO BREAK...

NO!

THAT IS AN AMATI... IT IS THREE CENTURIES...

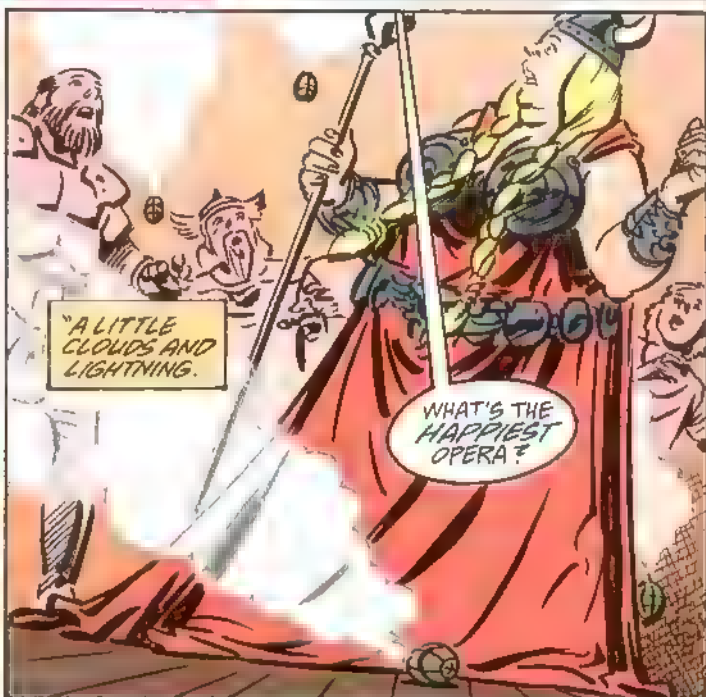








"MY OPUS WAS
REACHING ITS
CRESCENDO



"A LITTLE
CLOUDS AND
LIGHTNING.

WHAT'S THE
HAPPIEST
OPERA?



"A LITTLE
THUNDER

WHY
LOWENGRIN,
NATURALLY



WHY WAS
THE FIDDLER
SO QUIET?

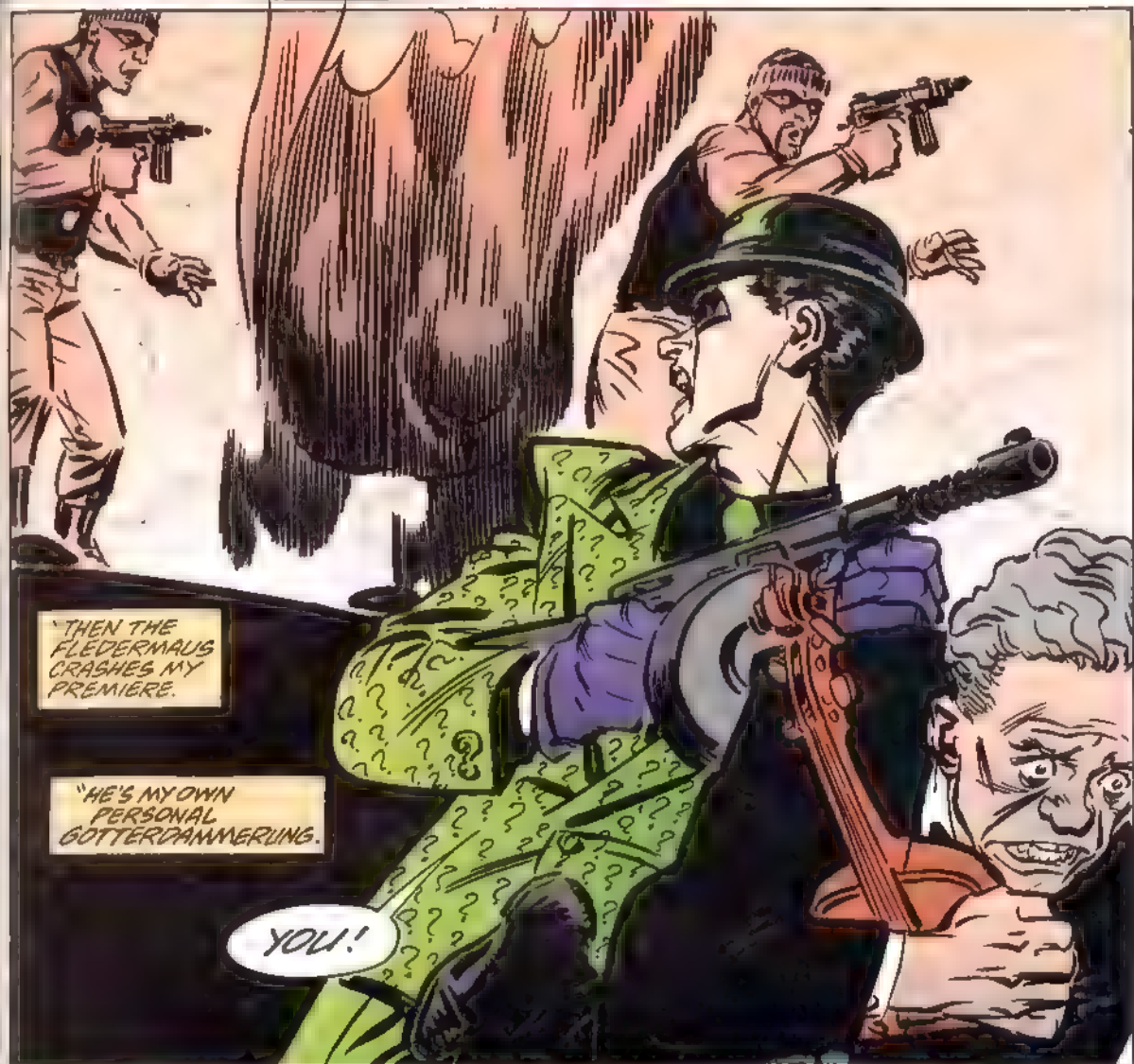
'CAUSE A
CATGUT HIS
TONGUE.

HAND
IT OVER,
YO-YO.



BUH-BUT IT'S A
STRADIVARIUS.

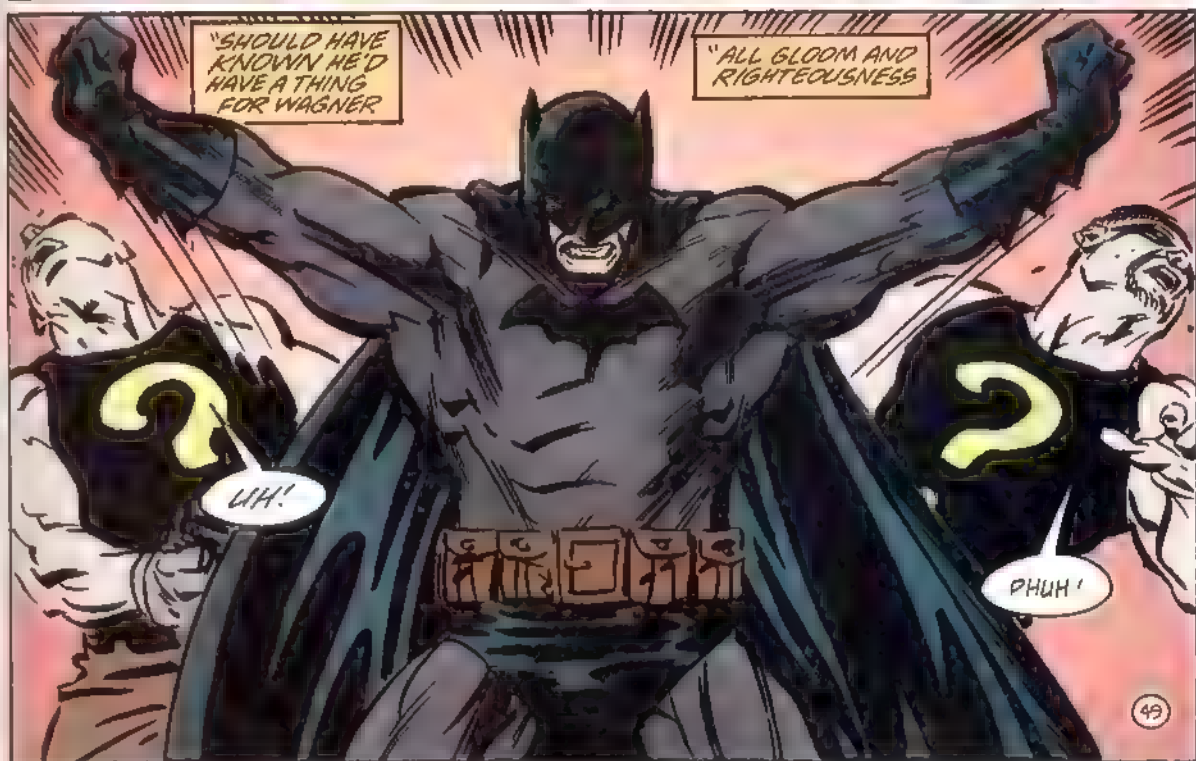
AND YOU
COULD BE
A CANOE,
YASCHA.



"THEN THE
FLEDERMAUS
CRASHES MY
PREMIERE."

"HE'S MY OWN
PERSONAL
GOTTERDAMMERUNG."

YOU!



"SHOULD HAVE
KNOWN HE'D
HAVE A THING
FOR WAGNER"

"ALL GLOOM AND
RIGHTEOUSNESS"

UH!

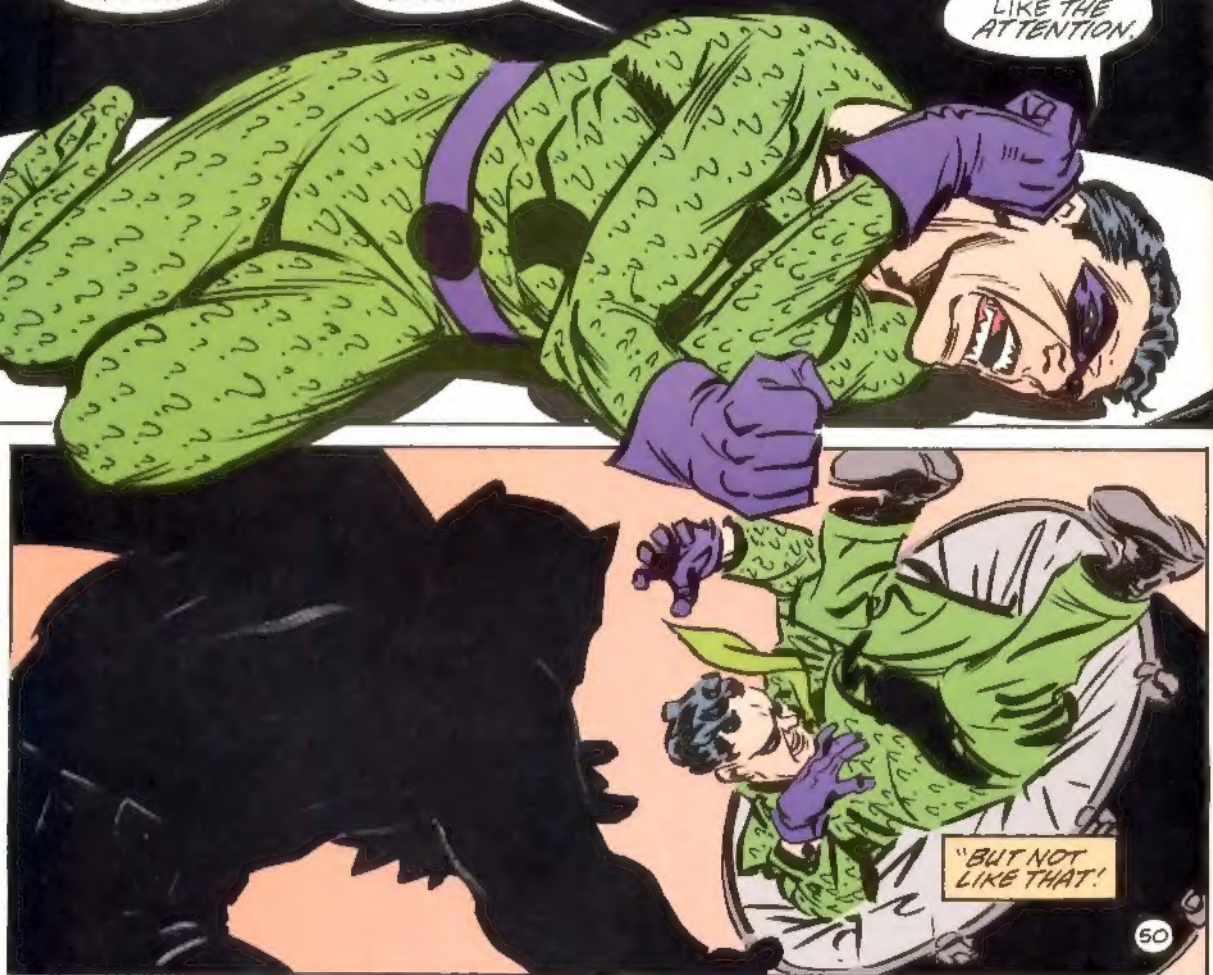
PHUH!



IT WASN'T
THE MONEY I
WANTED.

IT WASN'T
THE ACTION I
SOUGHT.

I JUST
LIKE THE
ATTENTION.





"AND THAT'S MY STORY."

"AND IT ENDS HERE IN ARKHAM."



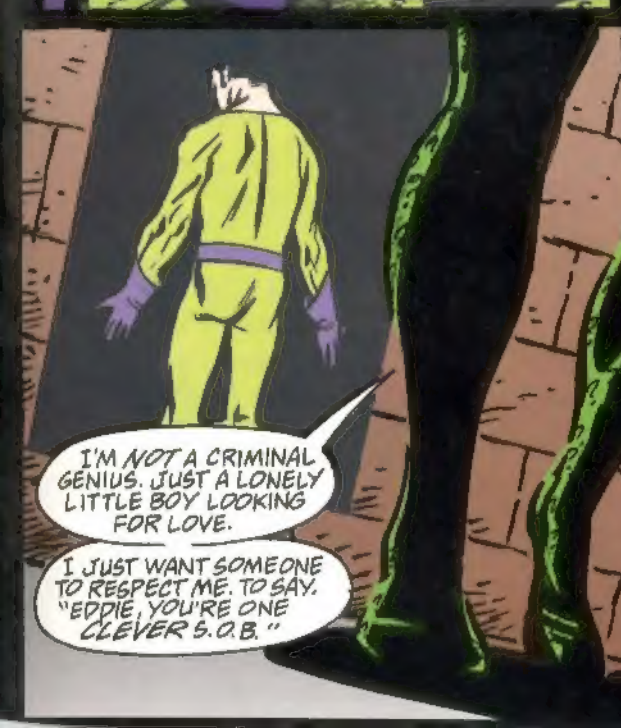
--BUT ONLY THIS CHAPTER!

I'LL SHAKE THE DUST OF THIS PLACE OFF ME AND THEN THE BATMAN WILL HAVE A REAL RIVAL FOR GOTHAM!



THERE. THAT'S ALL OF IT. MY PSYCHOSIS. MY MANIA. MY FAULT.

THE SECRET YOU'VE BEEN DIGGING FOR ALL THESE MONTHS.



I'M NOT A CRIMINAL GENIUS. JUST A LONELY LITTLE BOY LOOKING FOR LOVE.

I JUST WANT SOMEONE TO RESPECT ME. TO SAY, "EDDIE, YOU'RE ONE CLEVER S.O.B."



YOU DON'T BELIEVE ME?

WELL...



NOTHING
TO SAY?

NO
SMART-LIPPED
POP-PSYCH
REJOINDER?



NO SNAP
JUDGEMENTS?

I TOLD YOU
MY STORY! I
ANSWERED
YOUR QUESTIONS!
I'VE LAID
MYSELF
BARE!



I'M NOT
A RIDDLE
ANY MORE!



I'M NOT
A RIDDLE
ANY MORE!

I'M NOT
A RIDDLE
ANY MORE.



HUH?

SESSION'S
OVER, EDDIE!

